■ Entertainment / C4

Aldeguer Sisters: Still kicking after 30 years

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John O links FVR to rape raps

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FedEx coach steps down

■ World / A13

Bosnia war crime fugitive eludes raid

Tanong ng Bayan / A22

Isyu kay Kabayan: Paninira o katotohanan?

Panayam kay Pacita Torralba mamayang alas-10 ng gabi

DepEd lifts campaign ban on campuses

PWEDE NA! MERON BANG TAO?

By Dona Pazzibugan, TJ Burgonio and Juliet L. Javellana

WITH THE Department of Education backtracking on its "campaign-free schools" order, campuses have be-

DEPED/ A21

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

2 more disqualification cases filed against GMA

By Martin P. Marfil

TWO more disqualification cases have been filed against President Macapagal-Arroyo in the Commission on Elections, bringing the total number of such cases to 10.

One petition was filed yesterday by Mike Planas, an opposition candidate in Quezon

2 MORE / A21

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

Friday, April 2, 2004 ★★★ 84 pages / 10 sections / vol. 19 / no. 116 P18

website: www.inq7.net

4 kidnap suspects slain

Girl, 4, also dies during shoot-out on crowded street in Navotas

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr. and Armand N. Nocum

A 4-YEAR-OLD girl was killed along with four suspected kidnappers during a shoot-out yesterday on a crowded street in Navotas between the latter and operatives of the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force (NAKTF).

Five suspected members of the Allan Balimbingan kidnap-for-ransom group on board a Mitsubishi sedan fired on the NAKTF operatives, triggering the shoot-out, according to PO3 Charlie Bontigao, case investigator.

A passing Nissan Vanette was hit by stray bullets, injuring the driver and the five children on board. Also among the wounded were the fifth suspected kidnapper, the driver of a passing truck and his helper, as well as an officer of the task force.

Jonalyn Gallando told the INQUIRER that she and her daughter Jennifer were inside their shanty on Road 10, North Bay Boulevard South, at about 12:30 p.m. when gunshots rang out. Jennifer was then at play.

The mother said the next thing she knew, Jennifer was bleeding. The child's father took her to the Tondo Medical Center but she died on the way.

There was blood all over the scene of the shooting, with more than 20 empty bullet shells scattered around the suspected kidnappers' car. The vehicle's windshield was shattered; its left tires were punctured.

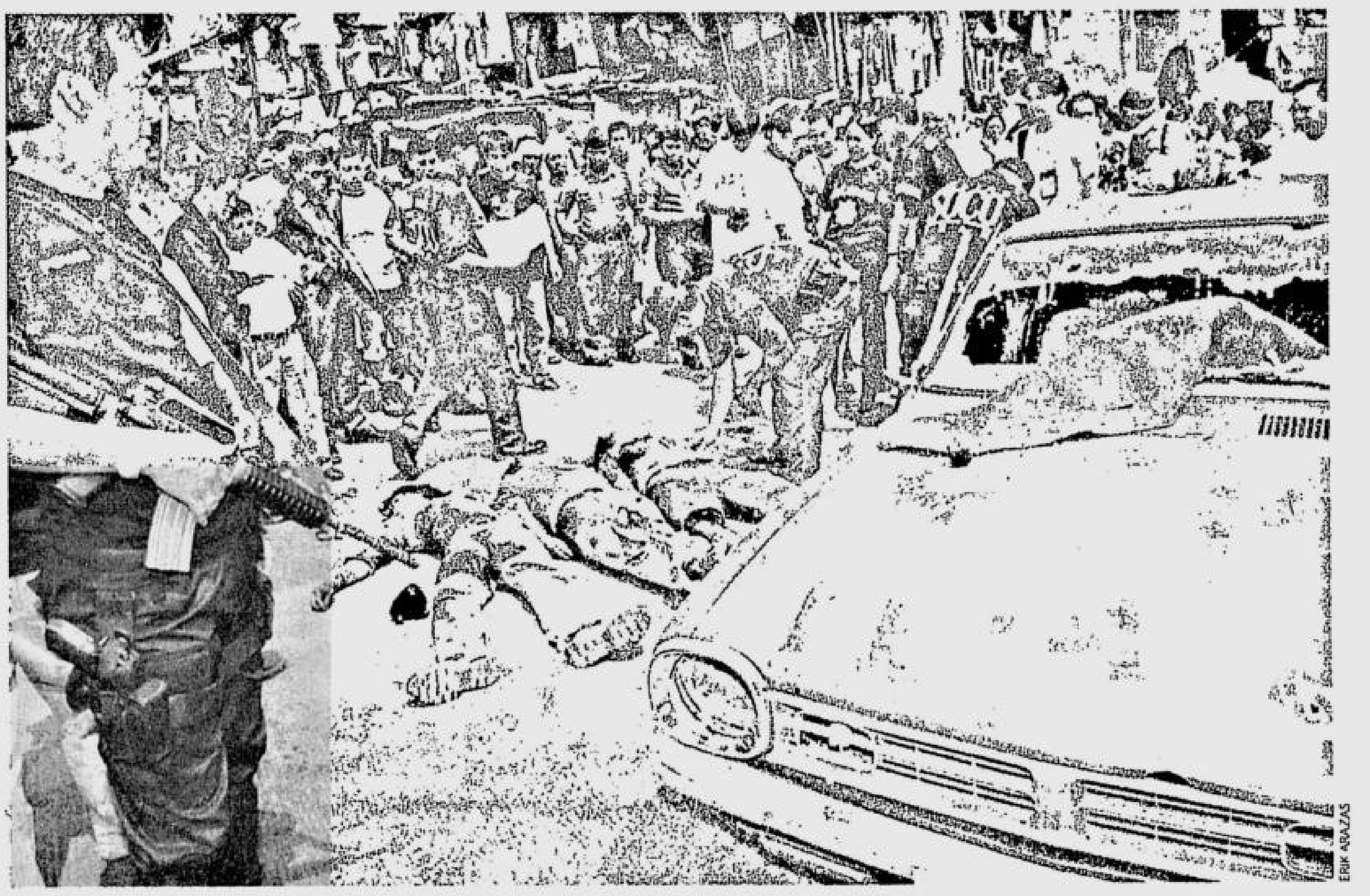
Jonalyn showed reporters the hole in their shanty caused by the bullet that killed her daughter.

The NAKTF, headed by former Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes, has clamped down on suspected kidnappers, arresting or killing more than 70 in the past four months.

But the widow of an alleged aide of Reyes' has linked him, and now anti-crime crusader Teresita Ang-See, to other kidnappings, including that of Negros Occidental Rep. Jules Ledesma's two children in 2002.

For the second time, Lorna Justine Ramoso, whose late husband Rogelio was a reported "civilian agent and close-in bodyguard" of Reyes', filed in the Ombudsman charges of graft, terrorism, kidnapping,

4 KIDNAP/ A20



ERIK ARAZAS

DEAD ON THE SPOT: Three bodies remain on a crowded street after a fierce exchange of gunfire between lawmen and suspected members of a kidnapping syndicate in Navotas, Metro Manila.

Abu recruiting teenagers for bombing missions

By Arlyn dela Cruz
Contributor

(Last of two parts)

SPECIAL REPORT

NO LESS than Abu Sayyaf chief Khadaffy Janjalani—possibly with the help of a foreign militant—is personally conducting the training of young Muslims for bombing missions in Metro Manila.

Some of his recruits are teenagers.

"It's part of my job as *amir* (spiritual leader) of the group," the fugitive leader of the Moro bandit group in Mindanao told the INQUIRER.

In a phone interview, Janjalani alluded to "trainings" of recruits for bombing operations as early as June 2002. The most recent training was concluded in January.

"The mission is called the *amaliya istishhadiya* ... We do not call it suicide bombing," he said.

Amaliya means "operation," while *istishhadiya* means "death through martyrdom," he explained.

He said the course given to volunteer mujahideens (warriors) was a combination of rigid Islamic studies and military training with special focus on "explosives."

"Our studies during training are similar to the training of those in explosives team of the government, but we know something (about bombs) which they don't know, or they know something we don't know. Each has his own design," Janjalani said.

By design, he meant the type of bombs which each side made.

A retired senior intelligence officer of the Armed Forces, who says he has "assets" or informants in areas of Central Mindanao where Janjalani is believed to be hiding,

ABU RECRUITING/ A20

VAL HANDUMON

HONORARY NURSE

President Macapagal is declared an adopted honorary nurse by this year's graduating class of the Southeast Asian College in Quezon City.

Maynilad exec says new firm can handle debts

By Philip C. Tubeza, Elizabeth L. Sanchez and Michael Lim Ubac

THE NEW company that would come out of the deal between the government and the Lopez-owned Maynilad Water Services would be financially viable enough to pay its debts without getting government funding, according to a Maynilad official.

Salvador Tirona, Maynilad chief financial officer, said the Lopezes would probably even find the new company's financial condition attractive if it were offered to them again.

Tirona said the new company would be able to handle Maynilad's remaining debts, estimated at between P10 billion and P11 billion, because these would be restructured.

He said the new company would surely profit from its business of providing water to city residents in the western half of Metro Manila.

"There is a fixed return on investment; cash flow is predictable because you have tariffs, and you have provisions for recovery," Tirona said Wednesday night at a briefing for the INQUIRER.

"From a project-finance point of view, from an investment banker's point of view, they will see the value of the project," he said.

He said the Lopezes might give it a second look if the concession was again offered to them.

"If it is given back to us under the circumstances—with the debt reduced and restructured, honestly, our principals are saying 'Oh the cash flows look good; the profitability is all right,'" Tirona said.

But Maynilad lawyer Roderico Puno said there was "no way" that the Lopezes would go back

MAYNILAD/ A21

Energy chief warns of power rate hikes after polls

By Abigail L. Ho
Business

WHEN THE wooing by President Macapagal-Arroyo stops, voters will be hit by a new round of power rate increases.

The increases will come a few days after the May 10 elections, Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. said yesterday.

Perez said the increases would result from the lifting of the cap of 40-centavos per kilowatt-hour (kWh) on the purchased power cost adjustment (PPCA) of the state-run National Power Corp.

Ms Macapagal imposed the cap almost two years ago during a Labor Day speech amid protests over the high purchased power adjustment (PPA), a component of the cost of electricity paid for by consumers.

Perez said the lifting of the PPCA cap would help Napocor cut its losses, which rose to P73.1 billion last year. Industry observers see the losses growing even more to between P113 billion and P140 billion this year.

The imposition of the cap resulted in "artificially low" rates being charged by Napocor to its customers, according to Perez.

For Luzon, Napocor is charging P2.22 per kWh when it should be charging P3.01, based on its rate application to the Energy Regula-

ENERGY / A21

Abu terror suspects framed, say kin

By Rosa-May V. de Guzman and Edwin O. Fernandez
PDI Mindanao Bureau
and Christian V. Esguerra

RELATIVES of six alleged terrorists, including four Arabic teachers from Turkey, yesterday denied the suspects had any links to the Abu Sayyaf bandit group or the Jemaah Islamiyah regional terror network.

The four Turks were arrested by immigration agents at their rented apartment on Gonzalo Javier Street in Cotabato City at around 10 p.m. yesterday. The suspects were identified as Mansur Omercikuglo, Ahmet Kaya, Alpaslan Gul and Ismael Kocabiyik.

But Zamzamin Ampatuan, executive director of the Office of Muslim Affairs, said the four Turks, aged between 29 and 34, were Arabic instructors at the Imam Institute, a private Islamic school that he owned.

"These people are peace-loving educators who have been helping us run our educational institute," Ampatuan said of the four teachers from Istanbul, who were being held for their alleged links to the JI.

Relatives also denounced the arrest of Abdulwali Villanueva and Rodendo Cain Dellosa, saying they were framed. President Macapagal-Arroyo said Tuesday that Villanueva and Dellosa, together with four other suspected terrorists, were part of an Abu Sayyaf cell planning a "Madrid-level" attack on several targets in Metro Manila.

"His arrest was a big mistake," Villanueva's 29-year-old wife Hana told a news conference.

ABU TERROR/ A20

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly over Mindanao.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAM LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/04/02/04

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

FVR behind rape case, says John O

By Michael Lim Ubac

REELECTIONIST Sen. John Osmeña yesterday accused former President Fidel V. Ramos of being behind the rape complaint lodged against him by a male sex worker on Wednesday.

In a press conference, Osmeña said Ramos engineered the "political hatchet job" so that the senator would be junked from the administration K-4 coalition's slate.

Junking operation

"Actually, I'm now the target of a junking operation that is being undertaken by no less than former President Fidel Ramos," Osmeña said.

Junking during elections occurs when a candidate's name is deleted from the official party-list, or sample ballot, to accommodate outsiders.

Asked Ramos' motive, Osmeña said: "Because I have been relentless in exposing his (involvement in irregularities in power projects during his term)."

Osmeña said his present inquiry into the Maynilad Water Services "bailout" would also lead to Ramos.

"I'm not targeting him per se. But if all my investigations point to him, is that my fault?" he said at the press briefing held at the Senate.

Ramos' spokesperson Ed Malay said the former president did not want to dignify Osmeña's accusation by making a comment.

"The (former) president would never do that. It is so petty. *Napakawalang kuwenta*," Malay said.

He said Osmeña was "imagining things."

Malay said Osmeña always blamed Ramos for his woes and linked him to destabilization attempts.

"*Ayusin niya ang sarili niya. Huwag na siyang mandamay ng iba* (He should straighten himself out. He shouldn't drag other people into this.)," Malay said.

Malay said Ramos was campaigning for the K-4 coalition candidates, including Osmeña.

"The former president has accepted the lineup and he's even campaigning for the slate in Pangasinan and other areas," Malay said.

'Cooked-up'

To bolster his allegation the rape case had been "cooked up," Osmeña said, "a reporter of a tabloid as early as 4 a.m. was calling up the media in Manila asking them to accompany (the accuser) to Tagaytay to file his complaint. Nobody heeded them except one TV network."

"It is not surprising that GMA-7, whose owner is a friend of Ramos', accompanied (the complainant)," he said.

GMA-7, for its part, yesterday denied that it was part of a conspiracy against Osmeña.

In a statement, the network said it believed it handled the Osmeña rape story "responsibly and fairly."

"GMA News was reporting on a legitimate story—the filing of a case in court against an incumbent public official. GMA News got a tip from a source who identified himself as a media practitioner. Maki Pulido was assigned to the story as she headed towards Laguna to cover the transport strike in Southern Luzon," the statement said.

Osmeña said that Ramos, who is administration party Lakas-CMD's president emeritus, wanted Heherson Alvarez on the K-4 slate instead of him.

Alvarez is running for senator as an independent after he was dropped from the K-4 slate to accommodate Osmeña.

"Lakas is part of the K-4 coalition. If Lakas is supporting an independent candidate, who among us (12 candidates) will they junk? It is clear to me that I'm their target," Osmeña said. "This (rape) case is part of this hatchet job."

But he stressed that Ramos had "nothing to do with K-4. The problem is for President Gloria to (fix). If one of her candidates is being sabotaged by one of her colleagues in K-4, then that is her problem, not mine."

Senate minutes

As for the alleged rape, Osmeña showed reporters a copy of the Senate minutes of Feb. 5, which started at 3:59 p.m. and ended at 12:51 a.m. the following day.

"It simply means that from the time the session started, I was here at the Senate, so the complaint ... is all lies," Osmeña said.

He said he was present during the roll call, but slipped away briefly to the nearby Emerald Restaurant at dinner time to meet with three congressmen and more than 70 barangay captains from Mandaue and Cebu cities.

He said he returned shortly after to catch the rest of the session.

The sex worker, Diego Gomez, 24, had said the rape occurred in the evening of Feb. 5 in a Tagaytay City resort.

Gomez charged that Osmeña inserted his finger into his (Gomez') rear, an act that supposedly was not agreed upon. Gomez, however, admitted receiving P15,000 from the pimp who had brought him to the senator.

'Proved a liar'

"Only one detail—the time—has proven him a liar," the senator said, referring to Gomez. "That is the plain and simple truth; I don't need to elaborate."

Osmeña said his lawyers were preparing libel charges against Gomez, GMA-7 and the tabloid reporter.

In Tagaytay, the city prosecutor's office yesterday sent out subpoenas to Osmeña and Gomez for the preliminary investigation of the case on April 21.

Assistant city prosecutor Ernesto Vida said the subpoena for the senator was picked up by his lawyers.

He said Osmeña has 10 days to submit his counter-affidavit. *With Juliet Javellana and Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

TV reporter feels brunt of Poe ire

By Christine O. Avendaño

ILOILO CITY—Fernando Poe Jr. berated a television news reporter last night when she suddenly appeared on stage while he was addressing a campaign rally in Tigbauan town, some 22 km south of this city.

GMA-7 reporter Sandra Aguinaldo said she was surprised at the way Poe embarrassed her in front of the crowd.

In an interview with the INQUIRER and in a live broadcast over GMA-7, Agiunaldo said she had gone up the stage to do a "stand upper," or an on-the-scene report.

But because there were many people on the stage, she was forced to stand close to Poe who was giving his speech.

Poe then came to her side and offered her the microphone he was holding.

"Would you like to speak?" Aguinaldo quoted Poe as saying to her. She said she could only shake her head and step back in reply.

"*Hindi nga, gusto mo yata magsalita* (Really, it looks like you want to speak)," she said Poe insisted. She said she only shook her head some more and retreated from her position.

After Poe finished his speech, she said his running mate Sen. Loren Legarda and spokesperson Sen. Vicente Sotto III approached her and demanded that she apologize to the actor.

Aguinaldo told them she had only meant to do a stand upper—something she said Legarda understood being a former broadcast journalist.

But she said that Legarda told her, "*Mag-apologize ka para matapos na* (Apologize to get it over with)."

She told them she was the one who was embarrassed by Poe and she didn't want to apologize.

Later, Legarda told another reporter it was Sotto's idea to make Aguinaldo apologize. For her part, Legarda said what she did "was done in good faith since the situation was unclear at the time."

Over GMA-7, Aguinaldo said she felt insulted by Sotto's and Legarda's demand because she was only doing her job.

Nevertheless, she approached Poe, who told her that what she did was wrong.

"*Ang sabi ko sa kanya di ko naman gusto na agawan ka ng eksena pero ginagawa ko lang ang trabaho ko* (I told him I didn't want to grab the spotlight but I was only doing my job)," she said she told Poe.

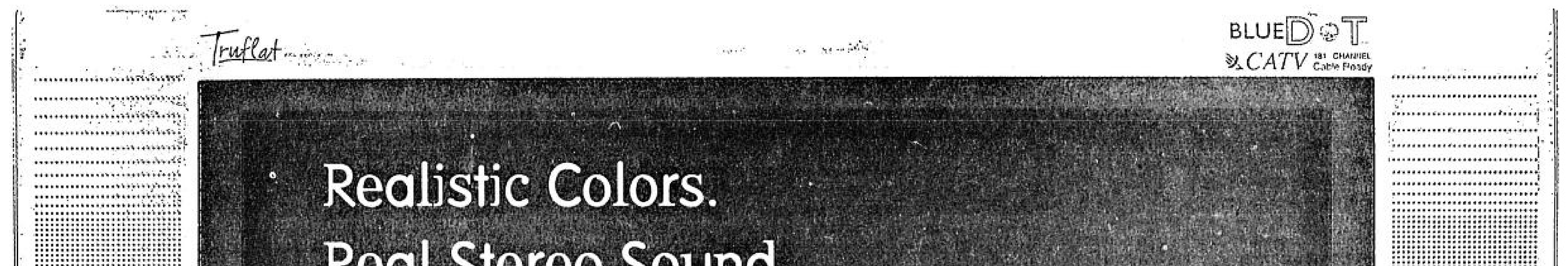
She said Poe raised his voice and told her: "*Ang lagay nyan ako pa ang may kasalan*(So now it's my fault)."

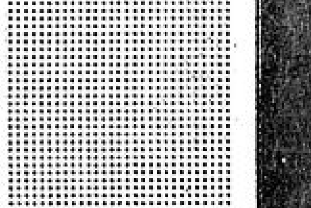
Aguinaldo told the INQUIRER she explained to Poe what a stand upper was and Poe replied, "'Hindi yun eh, yung mga tao nakatingin sa iyo (It wasn't that; you grabbed the people's attention).'"

Sotto told the INQUIRER he heard Aguinaldo explain her side to Poe and he did not like the way she did it.

"It was the height of arrogance for a reporter like her," he said. Sotto said he called up GMA-7 to ask that another reporter be assigned to cover Poe's campaign.

"I requested Channel 7 to send somebody else," he told the INQUIRER.

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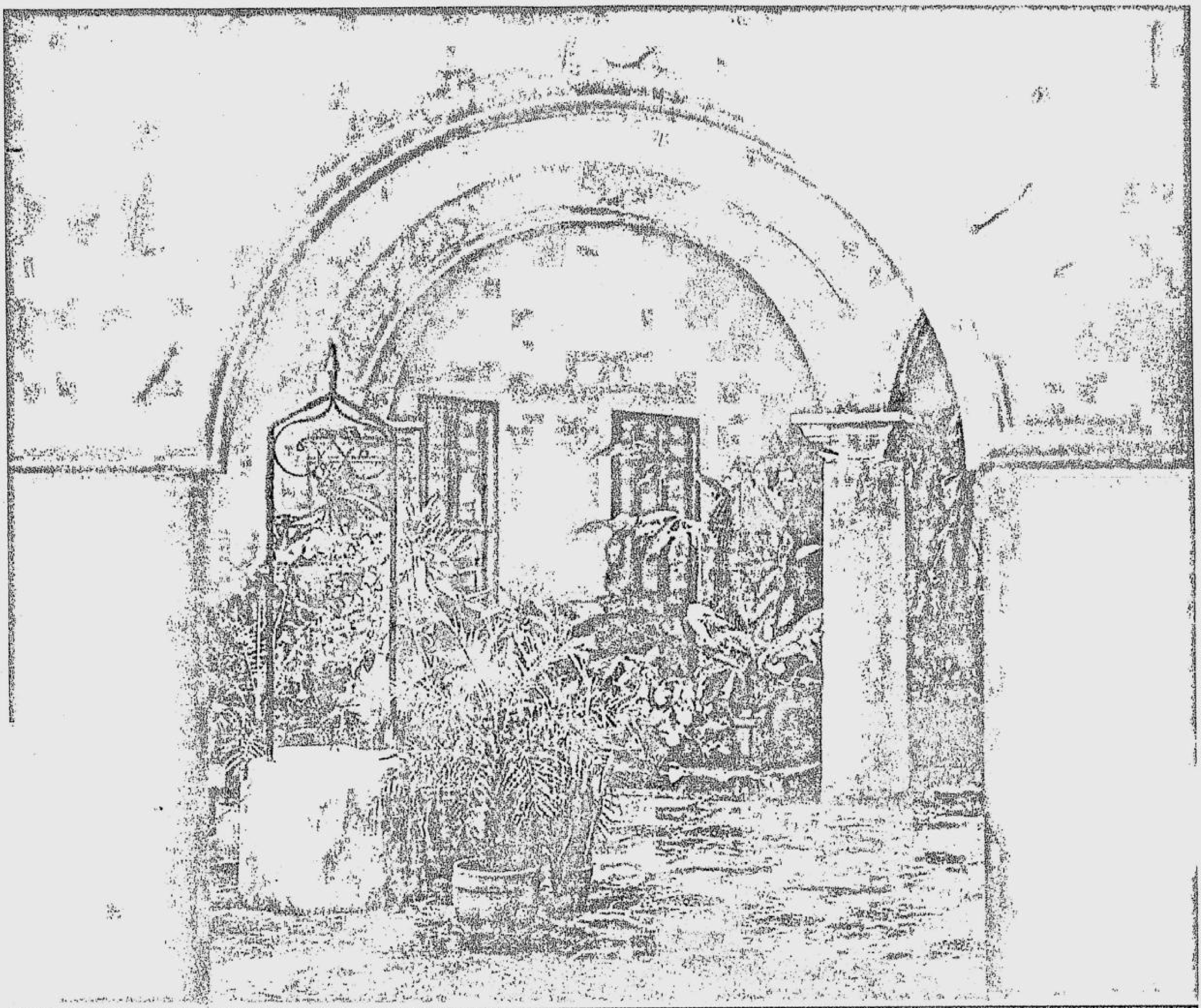

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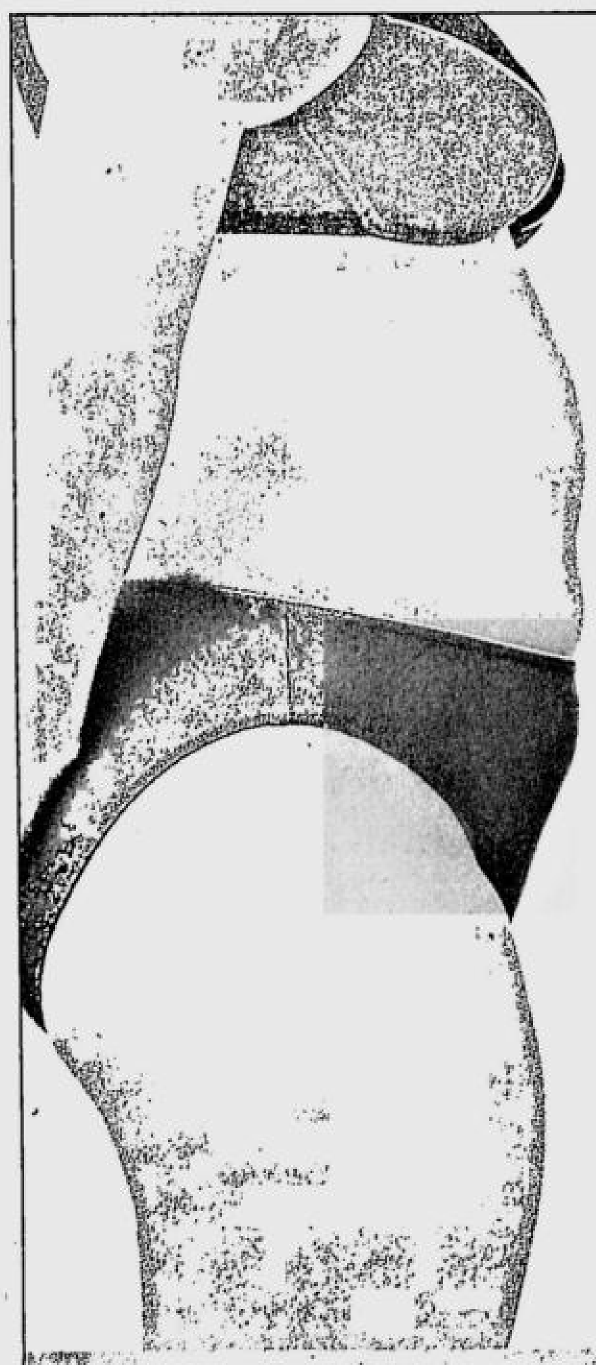

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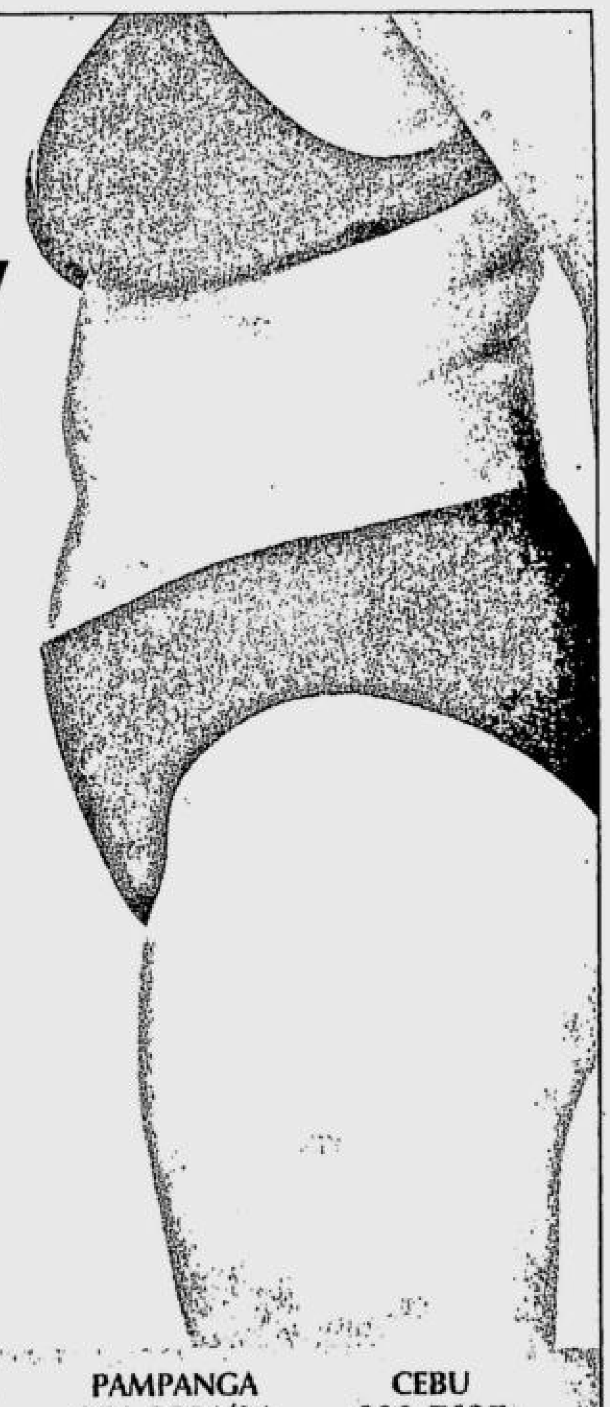

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CA opposes equal stature of tax appeals court

By Philip C. Tubeza

JUSTICES of the Court of Appeals have asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to veto a bill proposing to make the Court of Tax Appeals equal in rank with the CA.

In a letter dated March 22, CA Presiding Justice Cancio C. Garcia "strongly" recommended that the President veto the consolidated Senate Bill 2721 and House Bill 6673, saying it would diminish the CA's stature and demoralize its member justices.

"The prominent stature of the CA as the court next only to the Supreme Court under the existing hierarchy of courts would thereby be lost, if not altogether diluted," Garcia said.

He also argued that elevating the CTA to the level of the CA could affect the morale of the justices of the Court of Appeals.

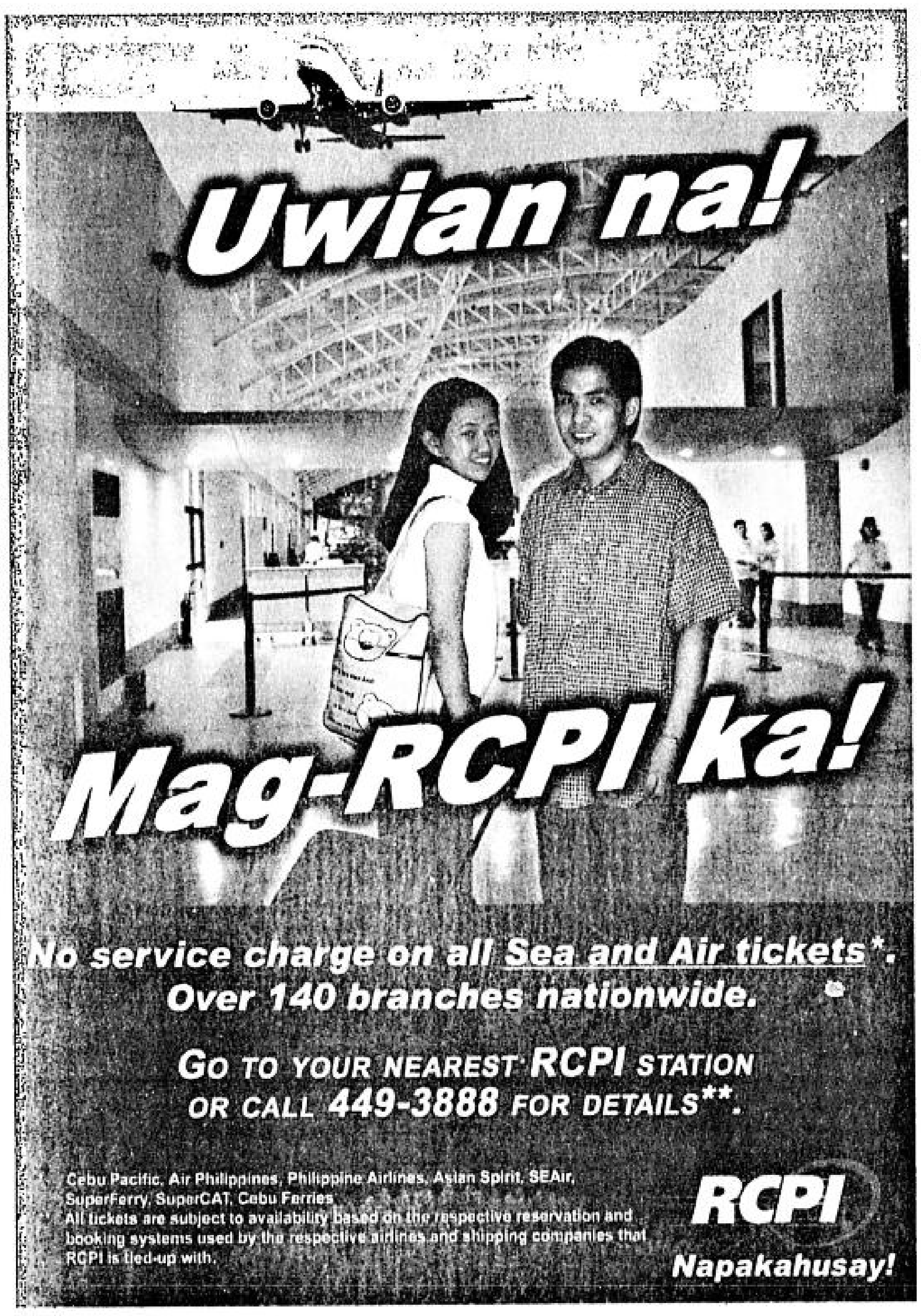
Garcia sent the letter to the Supreme Court court administrator Presbitero Velasco Jr. through the office of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

The consolidated bill, once signed into law, will expand the CTA's jurisdiction and elevate its rank to the level of a collegiate court with special jurisdiction and more members.

Garcia said that this could cause demoralization as it would give the CTA justices the same privileges, rank and salary as that of the CA justices.

GMA IN ROCO COUNTRY

This Malacañang photo, taken Tuesday in Pili, Camarines Sur, debunks the myth that the Bicol Region is the bailiwick of presidential candidate Raul Roco, who hails from Bicol, according to a Malacañang press release. During a meeting, the six governors of the region pledged their all-out support for the bid of President Macapagal-Arroyo for a full six-year term in the May 10 polls. Among those who expressed their support for the President were Camarines Sur Gov. Luis Villafuerte and his vice governor, Imelda Papin (third and second from left). The other governors in photo are Jesus Typoco of Camarines Norte, Al Francis Bichara of Albay, Leandro Verceles Jr. of Catanduanes, Raul Lee of Sorsogon, and Antonio Kho of Masbate.



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Jinggoy vows no special treatment for GMA after polls

By Raj Padilla
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo should not expect any special treatment from Fernando Poe Jr. if he wins the May 10 elections, according to two senatorial candidates of the opposition Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino.

Ms Macapagal could find herself facing a string of criminal cases in a Poe administration, said Jinggoy Estrada and Francisco Tatad.

"She has already committed a lot of irregularities. She should be sued for plunder in case she loses in the coming elections. She should expect it," said the son of jailed ex-president Estrada who is himself a co-accused in his father's plunder case.

Jinggoy said the President was wrong if she thinks she had done his father a favor when he was allowed to temporarily stay in his villa instead of being detained at Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal.

"Haven't we heard her say that she had nothing to do with it? So that's it. There was no effort on her part to help him out. She has not gone soft with us," he said.

"My father is in jail without any hard evidence that he plundered the nation. She hasn't allowed my father to stay in his rest house," said Jinggoy, who is free on bail.

Tatad said that while he had proposed an end to the alleged policy of vindictiveness and hate to unite the nation under a new administration, he clarified that he was referring only to personal offenses.

"Crimes against the Constitution and the Filipino people should be prosecuted," he said.

He cited the allegedly irregular North Luzon Expressway deal which he claimed gave unwarranted benefits to the Lopez-owned Benpres Holdings.

In a statement, Tatad repeated his allegations last Tuesday that the Benpres company, First Philippine Infrastructure Development Corp., ended up owning the 81-km tollway project with an earning potential of P432 billion in 30 years without infusing a single centavo in capital.

"This is a high crime for which all those involved should be prosecuted, whatever happens to [Ms Macapagal] in this campaign," he said.

Tatad branded as "pure rubbish" the claim by the FPIDC that it was not only President Macapagal-Arroyo but her predecessors who approved the scheme.

He said it might be correct to say that both Presidents Ramos and Estrada approved the idea of a joint venture between FPIDC and the Philippine National Construction Company, the state-owned firm that is the sole operator and franchise-holder of the North and South Luzon expressways.

But he claimed that it was Ms Macapagal who allegedly authorized the "incredible scheme" in which the FPIDC's P600-million original investment in the Tipo-Subic tollway was converted into equity in the joint venture in the amount of $126 million, simply by imputing an interest rate of 25 percent per annum, compounded monthly, at a time when the dollar interest rate was about 6 percent.

"The fact that FPIDC was able to borrow P17 billion from various international lenders on this paper capital is only one of the marvels of this scheme," he said.

"The more scandalous thing is that the project has allowed them to spend P222 million on every kilometer of road, three times more expensive than the graft-ridden Diosdado Macapagal Boulevard in Manila," he added.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, April 2, 2004
5th Week of Lent

1st Reading: Jer 20:10-13
Gospel: Jn 10:31-42

The Jews picked up stones to throw at Jesus so he said, "I have openly done many good works among you which the Father gave me to do. For which of these do you stone me?"

The Jews answered, "We are not stoning you for doing a good work but for insulting God; you are only a man and you make yourself God."

Then Jesus replied, "Is this not written in your Law: I said: you are gods? So those who received this word of God were called gods and the Scripture is always true. Then what should be said of the one anointed and sent into the world by the Father? Am I insulting God when I say: 'I am the Son of God?'

If I am not doing the works of my Father, do not believe me. But if I do them, even if you have no faith in me, believe because of the works I do, and know that the Father is in me and I in the Father."

Again they tried to arrest him, but Jesus escaped from their hands. He went away again to the other side of the Jordan, to the place where John had baptized, and there he stayed.

Many people came to him and said, "John showed no miraculous signs, but he spoke of this man and everything he said was true." And many became believers in that place.

Commentary

"If I am not doing the works of my Father do not believe me." Talking about God is not enough, even when it is a Jesus who is talking. This is the greatest challenge to every preacher and every professor of theology. Christians often talk about "the Christian message" as if it could be written on a piece of paper. The Word was made flesh, not ink. St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "You are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone, but on the tablets of the human heart" (2Cor 3:3). Christians have coined a word to supplement "orthodoxy"; it is "orthopraxis." Orthodoxy means "right teaching"; orthopraxis would mean "right action." Our words have to become flesh too: to reach our fingertips, so to speak. "What good is it," wrote St. James, "if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food: if one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead" (Jas 2:14-17).

St. Francis once said to his brothers, "Go and preach. Use words if you have to."

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RP nurses' homes in Ireland attacked

By Jerome Aning

THE HOMES of two Filipino nurses in Northern Ireland were attacked for the second time last Wednesday, which local authorities have condemned as racist hate attacks, according to Northern Ireland media reports monitored by the INQUIRER.

The attacks in Portadown, Northern Ireland, occurred even as a court in the capital Belfast yesterday heard a bail petition from Jaybe Ofrasio, a Filipino who was arrested two months ago on charges that he was allegedly raising funds for terrorists.

Ofrasio, whose wife also works as a nurse in Belfast, was arrested last Jan. 29 and is facing two charges of making funds and property available to a terrorist group, which are violations of the United Kingdom's Terror Act of 2000.

Police in Portadown's Killicomaine area said they were looking into a possible racial motive for the attack on the houses of the Filipinas.

The windows of the nurses' homes were smashed at about 2 a.m. on March 31, local time, according to newspaper reports from Northern Ireland.

On Thursday last week, a large rock, several bricks and potted plants were thrown through the living room window of the house of one of the nurses.

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CRIMINAL LAW (MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES)—Requisites for self-defense—Self-defense is inherently a weak defense which, as experience has demonstrated, can easily be fabricated. To merit approbation, the accused is burdened to prove with clear and convincing evidence the confluence of the following essential requisites for self-defense: (a) there was unlawful aggression on the part of the victim; (b) that the means employed to prove or repel such aggression was reasonable; and (c) there was lack of sufficient provocation on the part of the person defending himself. Unlawful aggression contemplates an actual, sudden and unexpected attack on the life and limb of a person or an imminent anger thereof; and not merely a threatening or intimidating attitude. There can be no self-defense, complete or incomplete, where there is no unlawful aggression on the part of the victim. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Callejo, Sr., Second Division, Santos vs Court of Appeals, G. R. No. 126624, November 11, 2003]

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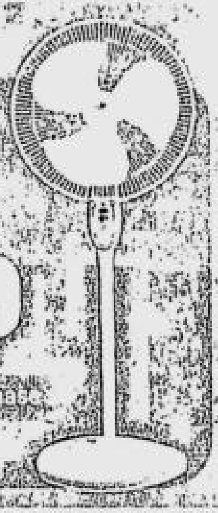

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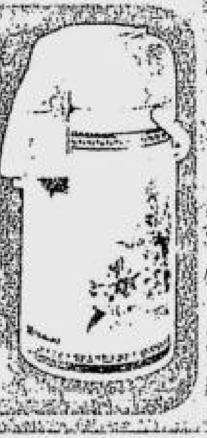

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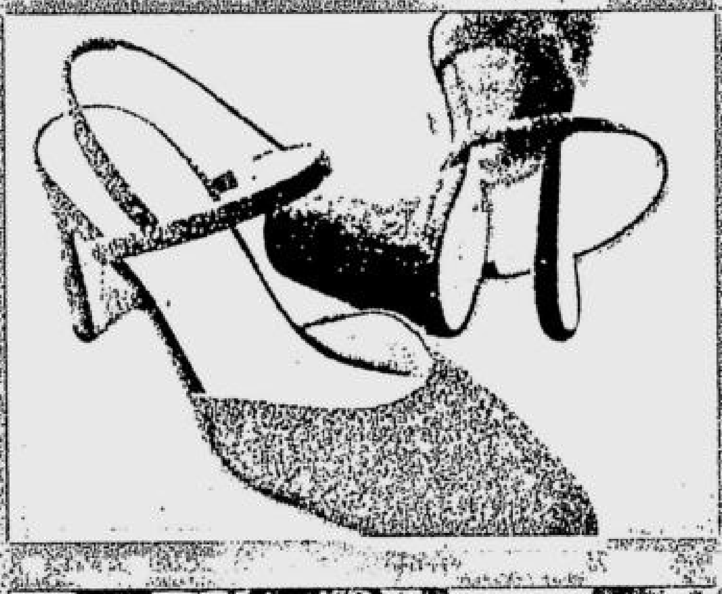

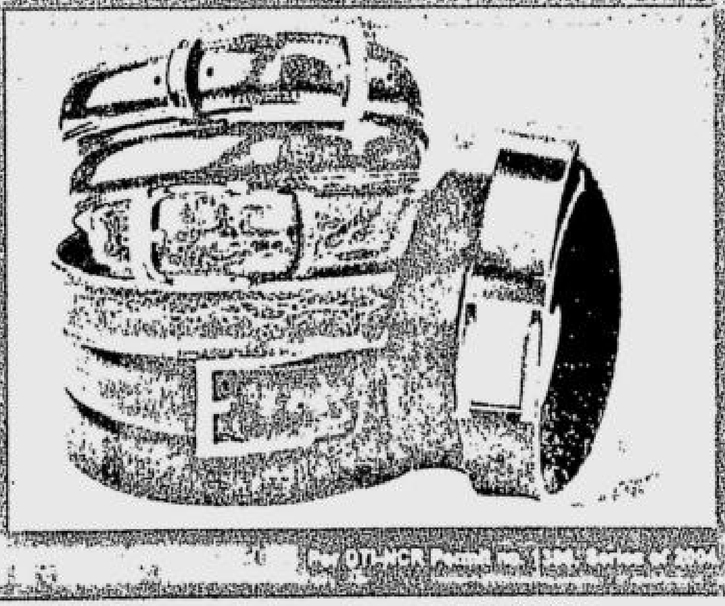

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RP accepts Republican apology for terror tag

By Jerome Aning

FOREIGN Secretary Delia Albert yesterday said the Philippines has accepted the apology of the National Republican Congressional Committee of the United States for labeling the Philippines as country that harbored and helped known terrorists in a voter survey.

In her weekly press conference, Albert said the NRCC chair, Rep. Tom Reynolds, personally apologized to the Philippine ambassador to the US, Albert del Rosario, on March 29. She said Reynolds took responsibility for the mistake.

President Macapagal-Arroyo on Monday directed the DFA to demand an apology from the NRCC for mislabeling the Philippines with Thailand as countries that "harbor and aid terrorists" in a question in a voter survey tied to Republican Party efforts to raise money.

A question in the NRCC's "Ask America 2004 Nationwide Policy Survey" asked: "Should America broaden the war on terrorism into other countries that harbor and aid terrorists such as Thailand, Syria, Somalia, the Philippines, etc.?"

The NRCC is a political committee devoted to increasing the 227-member Republican majority in the US House of Representatives.

"Representative Reynolds gave the assurance that remedial action will be taken. We accept this apology, we put this episode behind us and it is now time to move on," Albert said.

DFA spokesperson Julia Heidemann said Del Rosario accepted the apology and that Malacañang already knew of it.

"The apology is prompt and sincere so I think we should stop here and not make a big thing out of it, that would harm our relationship with the US. We accepted the apology and that's that," Heidemann said.

US Embassy charge d'affaires Joseph Mussomeli earlier clarified that the NRCC was a political organization and its views did not reflect that of the US government. President George Bush belongs to the Republican Party.

Mussomeli said the US "was working closely with the Philippine government and appreciate its cooperation with us and others in the region, including its efforts to root out organizations such as the Abu Sayyaf and the Jemaah Islamiyah."

Albert said the swift action of the Philippine Embassy in Washington was crucial in correcting the misimpressions of the survey and that the DFA would be vigilant in countering any future mistakes of the kind.

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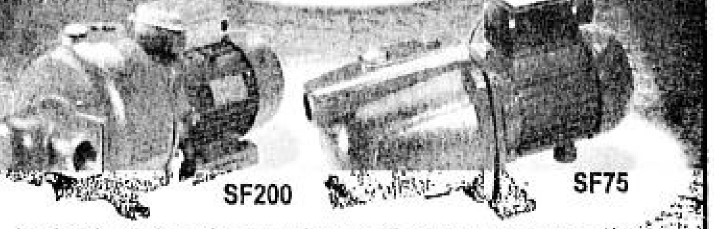

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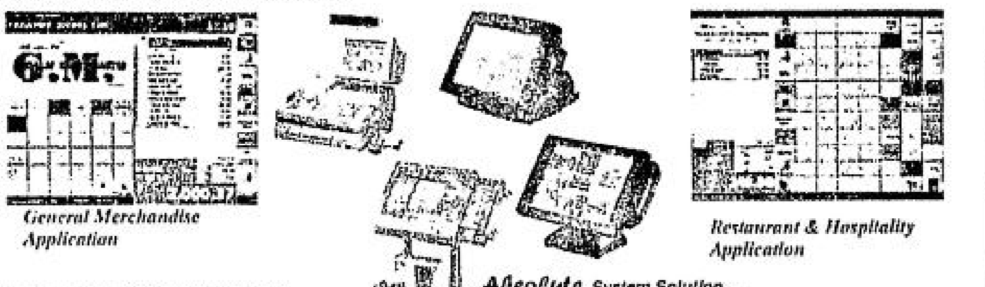
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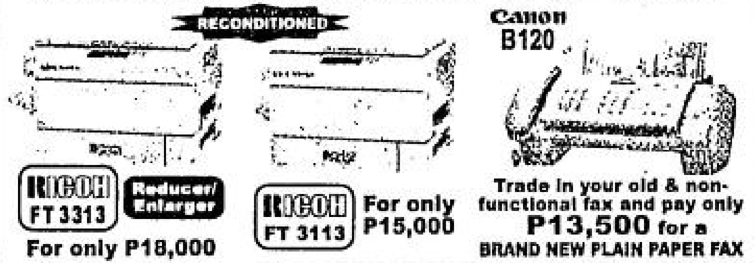

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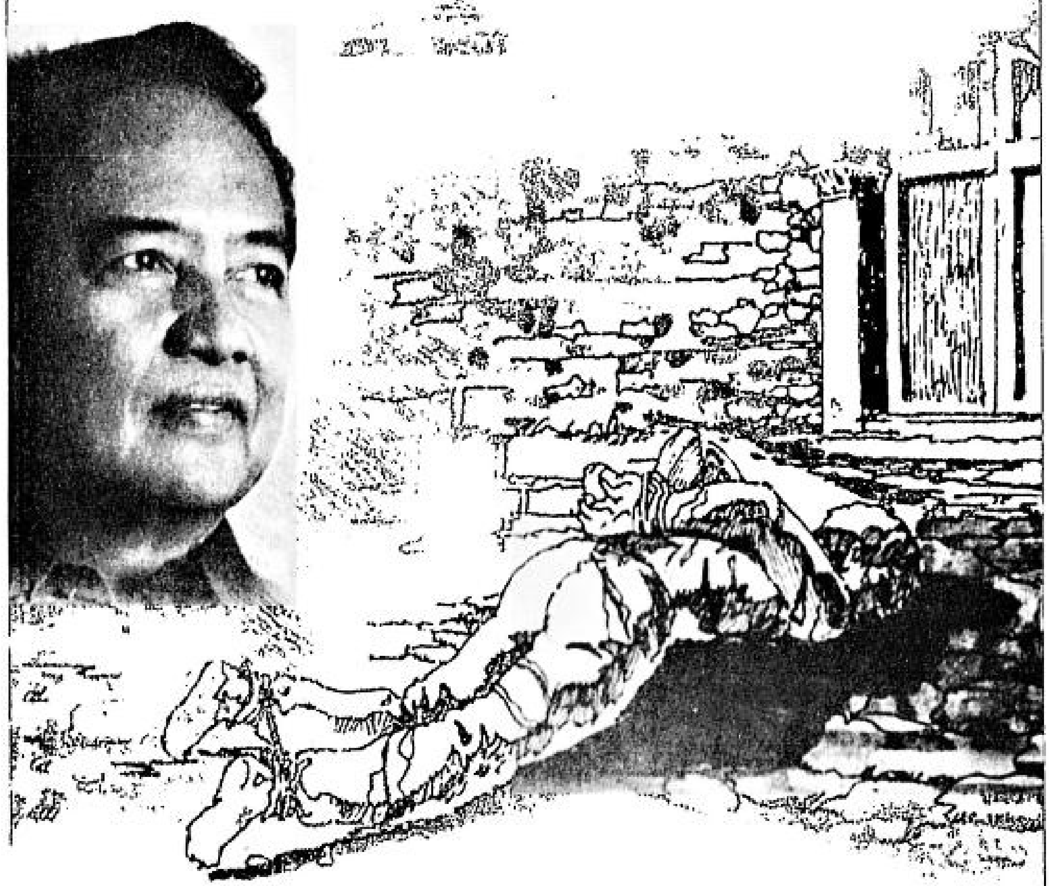

Noong 1974, ang luray-luray na katawan ni Marsman Alvarez, kapatid ni Heherson, ay itinapon sa harap ng isang simbahan sa Isabela. Inukit ang kanyang mga mata. Dinurog ang kanyang bungo at panga. Binunot ang dila, ngipin at kuko. Sa libing ni Marsman, inatake sa puso at namatay din ang ama ni Alvarez. Ang kanyang ina at isa pang kapatid ay halos nasiraan ng bait. Ang walang awang pagpaslang ay kabayaran ng walang takot na paglaban ni Heherson Alvarez sa diktadurya at mga TRAPO na kasabwat nito sa paggahasa ng sambayanan.

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• Pinarangalan ng United Nations Day Human Rights Award ng Fund for Free Expression, New York.

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Bilang Senador ng 12 taon:
• Ama ng Comprehensive Agrarian Reform at Cooperative Development Authority (CDA)
• Panday ng Nursing Act, National Commission on Culture and the Arts at Department of Energy, gayun din ang Eid'l Fitri para sa mga kapatid na muslim.
• Utak ng Clean Air Act, Integrated Protected Areas System at Solid Waste Management.
• Sponsor ng ratification ng ILO convention Rights of Migrant Workers at Indigenous Peoples.
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• Isinulong ang IMPEACHMENT laban kay ERAP.
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KAKAMPI NG KALIKASAN
Bilang DENR Secretary:
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• Inusig ang mga illegal loggers at mga makapangyarihang partido sa kontrobersyal na importasyon ng ozone depleting substance at hazardous waste.
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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0471 Series of 2004

Roco: Nothing wrong with religious support

By TJ Burgonio

THERE'S nothing wrong with the endorsement of presidential candidates by religious leaders, according to former Sen. Raul Roco and Tarlac Rep. Herminio Aquino of the Alyansa ng Pag-Asa.

Roco, who is seeking the presidency, said yesterday that as long as a religious leader is a Filipino citizen, he can support any candidate.

"As a lawyer, I don't see why a religious leader cannot endorse," said Roco. "If you're a citizen, you're entitled to choose and influence others.

Aquino, Roco's running mate, agreed with him. "Anybody can endorse," he said.

Roco said that he did not find questionable the traditional practice by religious leaders to vote as a bloc.

"Almost all groups vote by bloc. In Alyansa, we hope to vote by bloc. Aksyon Demokratiko votes by bloc. All groups organize so that they will vote as one," he told reporters in an interview in Tatalon, a slum village in Quezon City.

Roco was reacting to a petition filed by Bro. Mike Velarde of the influential El Shaddai with the Supreme Court seeking to reverse a Manila regional trial court ruling that declared unconstitutional the endorsement of candidates by religious leaders.

Manila Judge Concepcion Alarcon-Vergara ruled in June last year that the head of a religious organization, who "influences or threatens to punish" members, could be held liable for coercion for violating a citizen's right to vote freely.

Roco had admitted writing to the leadership of the powerful religious group Iglesia ni Cristo (INC) to relay his intention of running for president, and that he had received a "beautiful reply." He, however, declined to divulge it.

Presidential candidates often seek the endorsement of the INC leadership, whose members vote as a bloc during elections. The group, headed by Minister Eraño Manalo, commands two to four million votes, according to reports.

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Experience to carry me through—FPJ

By Christine O. Avendaño

ILOILO CITY—He may not have a professional's pedigree, but his life experiences are enough to carry him through the difficult task of handling the country's state of affairs.

"Life is in itself an experience, and I think I have been a survivor," opposition candidate Fernando Poe Jr. told reporters here, reacting to President Macapagal-Arroyo's statement to businessmen the other day that they had two options in the May elections—to go for someone with experience or for someone without any platform of government.

The President could not resist repeating her familiar line extolling the achievements of her administration, in contrast to "an untested candidate with no experience (Poe)," after acknowledging an apology from comedian Dolphy.

At the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino rally in Bohol last weekend for party standard-bearer Poe, his good friend, Dolphy had called the President "dumb" for playing innocent in the alleged scrapping of his television show at the Lopez-owned ABS-CBN television network.

The President accepted Dolphy's apology, but in a pre-birthday celebration dinner hosted by Gina de Venecia, wife of Speaker Jose De Venecia, she struck back by saying that the apology "did not remove the fact that the opposition has no platform of government, including a platform for the movie industry."

Asked to comment on the remark, Poe told reporters he had a platform for his friends in show business, but he did not give any details.

However, he said he hoped Dolphy's apology put an end to the controversy.

Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino senatorial candidates Juan Ponce Enrile, Boots Anson-Roa and Ernesto Maceda lauded Dolphy for being a gentleman by offering his apologies to the President.

Still a nuisance

By Martin P. Marfil

NO luck the second time around.

Yesterday, the Commission on Elections denied a plea filed by businessman Eddie Gil to reconsider his disqualification from the presidential race, saying that he was unable to raise substantial issues to warrant a reversal of a previous decision declaring him a "nuisance candidate."

In a decision issued by the commission en banc, the Comelec affirmed a ruling of its second division and denied Gil's motion for reconsideration filed on March 22.

The decision was signed by the seven commissioners, but one of their colleagues, Virgilio Garcillano, did not participate in the deliberations.

The case against Gil was filed by supporters of presidential candidate Bro. Eddie Villanueva who feared that if Gil was allowed to run, votes for him might be declared "stray votes" and not counted in his favor.

PREX convention

THE NATIONAL Association of Parish PREX Secretariats (NAPPS) is holding its 8th National PREX Convention on April 16 to 18 at the Easter College Gymnasium, Guisad Road, Baguio City for graduates of Parish Renewal Experience (PREX) Classes of various parishes all over the Philippines.

All graduates have been invited to attend.

The convention will tackle its theme, "The Call to Holiness," which has great importance and foreboding relevance to the current social and moral woes of our country today. Six soul-stirring and impressive talks will be delivered by speakers led by Bishops Jesus A. Cabrera, Florentino F. Cinense and Antonio B. Tobias, and Reverend Fathers Dominador Salonga, Ramon Ramos and Enrique Aloysius Alino. Mass celebrations will be led by Archbishop Angel N. Lagdameo, and Bishops Carlito J. Censon and Gabriel V. Reyes respectively during the three-day convention.

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Deadline for entries is on July 16, 2004.

Three (3) first prize winners for oil and three (3) first prize winners for watercolor will each receive P50,000 and a trophy designed by National Artist Napoleon Abueva. Six runners-up for both categories will each receive P20,000 and an ArtPetron trophy. Schools of winners will be given a 29" color TV.

For the new photography category, there will be six (6) first prize winners who will each receive P30,000, and six (6) runners-up who will each receive P15,000.

For full details and contest forms, go to your nearest Petron service station or call the Project Secretariat (Studio 5 Designs): (02)8909318 or (02)8953971 located at #28 Paseo de Roxas, Bel Air Village, Makati. You can also download the application form at www.artpetron.com.

PETRON

Paper drive wins 2 awards for Inquirer

IN LESS than a week, the Philippine Daily Inquirer's paper recycling campaign called the New Paper Drive received two awards from both the Gold Quill and the Anvil awards.

The New Paper Drive, a program that promotes solid waste management and buys old newspapers for recycling, won the Gold Quill Award of Excellence in economic, social and environmental development on Tuesday, four days after taking the Anvil Award of Merit in public affairs management and communications.

The annual drive, which kicks off every June, has already recycled over 230,000 kilos of old newspapers since it started in 2001, saving a total of 4,500 trees. The drive had, in the past, received the support of the Metro Manila Federation of Environment, the implementor of Linis-Ganda; the League of Corporate Foundations; the Archdiocese of Manila; and schools, universities, companies and foundations.

The INQUIRER also won the Gold Quill Award of Excellence in publication design for its corporate brochure, which was designed by Harrison Communications (a subsidiary of McCann Erickson Philippines).

The Anvil Awards of Merit were also given to the new INQUIRER Job Market television ads (made by the agency EURO RSCG) for revitalized product or service and to INQUIRER's Youth Readership Program—a series of activities promoting reading toward the development of a socially aware and critically thinking youth—for public affairs management and communications. Last year, the readership program garnered a Gold Quill Award of Excellence for economic, social and environmental development.

TAKING home the second award this year for INQUIRER's New Paper Drive are (from left to right) INQUIRER president Sandy Romualdez, publisher Isagani Yambot, and assistant vice president for strategic marketing communications Celine Madamba during the 2004 Gold Quill Awards.

Mirant bags 4 PR awards

MIRANT Philippines won four public relations awards from prestigious award-giving bodies for communications and PR programs implemented last year.

The company reaped honors at the 39th Anvil Awards of the Public Relations Society of the Philippines (PRSP) and the Gold Quill Awards of the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC).

For the Anvil Awards, considered as the Oscars of Philippine public relations, Mirant won an excellence award for its communications program for its Carbon Sink Initiative, an undertaking that will preserve and protect Quezon's mangrove forests.

It also won merit awards for its Barangay Electrification Assistance for Countryside Development (Project Beacon) public affairs program and a merit award for the Carbon Sink video documentary.

For the Gold Quill Awards, presented by IABC, Mirant won an excellence award for its Carbon Sink video documentary.

Receiving the Anvil and Gold Quill awards for Mirant was the Corporate Affairs team led by VP for Corporate Affairs Paul Flake, Public Affairs Manager Greggy Romualdez and Corporate Communications Manager Kim de Leon. Also receiving the awards were Foundation Executive Director Roberto Calingo and Environment Manager Rene Morente.

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PAMPI

The Philippine Association Of Meat Processors, Inc. (PAMPI) inducts its New Officers and Directors today.

Consumer welfare, above all, as our main objective in providing quality foods.

FELIX O. TIUKINHOY, JR.
PRESIDENT
Virginia Food, Inc.

TEODORO T. PO
VICE PRESIDENT
The Pacific Meat Co., Inc.

JOYCE B. ALCOREZA
SECRETARY
Dealco, Inc.

ADOR R. ORDOÑEZ
TREASURER
Roel's Food Corp.

VIVIAN C. LIM
AUDITOR
Gen OSI, Inc.

JEROME D. ONG
PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER
CDO - Foodsphere, Inc.

CEZAR D. CRUZ, JR.
DIRECTOR
Monterey Foods Corp.

RICKY O. HIZON
DIRECTOR
Pampanga's Best

REY C. LAPID
DIRECTOR
R. Lapid's Chicharon

FRANCISCO J. BUENCAMINO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MESSAGES

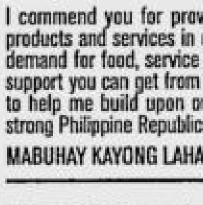
My sincere felicitations to the members and participants of the Philippine Association of Meat Processors, Inc. (PAMPI) on the Induction Ceremony of your New Set of Officers and Board of Directors for the year 2004-2005.

The strong performance of economy last year depended on the strong showing of the manufacturing and service sectors. With the help of our meat processors, the economy was stable even in the wake of a global economic slowdown. I am heartened to note that some of you have contributed to the increase of our exports. My administration is pushing for the development of manufacturing, along with agriculture, to win the battle against poverty.

I commend you for providing our countrymen with products and services in order to sustain our people's demand for food, service and jobs. You deserve every support you can get from the government. I enjoin you to help me build upon our achievements to attain a strong Philippine Republic.

MABUHAY KAYONG LAHAT!

GMArroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
PRESIDENT
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES



My warmest congratulations to the newly inducted Board of Directors and Officers of the Philippine Association of Meat Processors, Inc. on their Induction Ceremonies on April 2, 2004. Yours is truly a prestigious organization that is recognized as a frontrunner in the country's meat industry.

The meat industry has gone through difficult times. However, this has not derailed your organization's pursuit of its commitment of making meat products available to domestic consumers. Likewise, it has encouraged free enterprise as it created market opportunities for small and medium scale industries.

I urge the newly inducted Members of the Board and its Officers to continue the pursuit of the objectives and goals of this organization. As leaders, you would, no doubt, have ample opportunities to try and apply measures that would further strengthen your organization. The coming year may present daunting challenges that will test your strength and conviction as leaders. But as you continue to serve the Filipino people, may your commitment to achieve progress despite the numerous barriers be the footstool of your every action and endeavor.

MABUHAY KAYONG LAHAT!

TEOFISTO T. GUINGONA, JR.
VICE-PRESIDENT
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

Warmest greetings to the board of directors, officers and members of the Philippine Association of Meat Processors, Inc. (PAMPI) on the occasion of your 2004-2005 Induction Ceremonies.

Throughout my stint as Presidential Adviser on Job Creation and as current Agriculture Secretary, I have always looked upon PAMPI – which is comprised of the majority of our country's meat processing firms – as a strong private sector ally.

To sustain the growth of the country's meat processing industry, and the livestock industry in general, we at the Department of Agriculture have been exerting efforts to encourage all the stakeholders throughout the supply chain to remain united and move as one.

We strongly believe that only by strengthening each and every link in the supply chain – from the small backyard raisers, commercial farmers, integrators, slaughterhouses, operators, meat processors and traders, to retailers and the consuming public – can we ensure the continued viability and competitiveness of the entire industry.

I therefore enjoin the incoming PAMPI directors and officers to seek new perspectives in addressing the industry's lingering issues and challenges. Together, we must build a globally competitive agri-food sector. Together, we must strive for food security and put an end to hunger and poverty. And together, we must aim for sustained development and growth that leaves no one behind.

Again, the DA family and I thank PAMPI for its indispensable contributions to our farm sector. May we all succeed in our collective endeavors and may our partnership grow even stronger. Congratulations and more power!

LUIS P. LORENZO, JR.
SECRETARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Greetings!

To all my colleagues and associates at the Philippine Association of Meat Processors, Inc., thank you for the confidence you have bestowed upon me by re-electing me to my fifth consecutive year as President of the Association, actually making me the only six-termer president of PAMPI.

On this 15th year of PAMPI's existence, we have surely become stronger and more resolute in our convictions and visions. I have attempted to review our avowed mission when PAMPI was organized 15 years ago, and I can see no difference in what we are doing today from what we embarked on then in 1989. Faithfully and consistently, we have always addressed the common problems of our members and have worked towards goals and objectives that would promote our businesses, our sector, and the interests of all our stakeholders.

Our theme this year carries the inspiration by which we have existed as an association of dedicated members all these past 15 years, and I am so proud to have been chosen as your president.

Thank you for your support.

FELIX O. TIUKINHOY, JR.
PRESIDENT-PAMPI

The Philippine Association of Meat Processors, Inc. (PAMPI) inducts its new officers and directors today, 6:00 PM at the Vivere Hotel, Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

Coinciding with the induction rites is the celebration of the association's 15th anniversary, with the theme "Consumer Welfare, Above All," as our main objective in providing quality foods.

Ever since the meat processors formed PAMPI in 1990, their overriding concern then was ensuring stable supplies of raw materials for their factories so they can produce meat products that will be affordable to consumers.

Back then, meat processors were buying local beef, the supply of which was hardly enough to cope with their plants' requirements.

In 1994, during then Agriculture Secretary Roberto Sebastian's term, an alternative was introduced: buffalo meat, which the food processors found out met just the quality standards of their plants but was a lot cheaper than local-grade beef.

The same buffalo meat that solved the meat processors' problem in the nineties is now the same issue being raised against PAMPI by the local hog raisers, who continue to demand that no imports of carabeef be allowed since they compete in the local market with pork products.

And just like before, PAMPI finds itself in a quixotic mission of securing food supplies at affordable prices to consumers. Meat processors may not be as loud or dramatic as the hog raisers in presenting their issues and concerns, but their quiet performance in producing canned or processed meat through the years has no doubt benefited millions of consumers in the country in terms of stable supply and prices.

PAMPI Executive Director Francisco Buencamino, himself the first president and one of the founders of the P60 billion industry group, recalled that 15 years ago, corned beef was a fiesta item at P42 to P50 per can.

"No one in the provinces could afford corned beef for their day-to-day meals. It was simply too expensive as a viand," he said.

Now, PAMPI members are producing canned corned beef or commonly known as karne norte, for as low as P10 a can, which when added with vegetables can feed a family of five or six nowadays, he said.

Hotdogs, sausages, burger patties, tocinos and other meat products are also being produced in package sizes that the average consumer can afford, where before these were only sold by kilos at atrocious prices, he said.

Yet, for all the quiet service that PAMPI members have been giving to consumers, the hog raisers who obviously want to monopolize the local market would want meat processors to source all their raw materials from them.

PAMPI members get all their manufacturing grade carabeef from India, which though not FMD-free, practices vaccination at farms that ensures that the animals do not carry the virus to their intended markets, Buencamino said.

"Even the protocols of the world animal welfare, or the Office Internationale des Epizooties, allow meat trade from non FMD-free countries provided vaccination is practiced to ensure against transporting the virus to another market," he said.

Still, the hog raisers want to make a big issue out of carabeef importations, which based on their paranoid concern might be brought to the wet markets thereby competing directly with pork products, Buencamino said.

"Why should PAMPI members, who have a name and brand to protect here and abroad, risk everything for a one-time bonanza," he quipped.

Buencamino said the mindset of hog raisers is not to allow carabeef importations at all because of competition, which is smack of greed and arrogance.

"If PAMPI members get all their supplies from local hog raisers, how much could they sell their hotdogs, corned beef and other processed meat," he said.

But why should they, when pork prices have skyrocketed and continue to run away at P140 to P160 a kilo now for the past six to eight weeks, Buencamino asked.

When the escalating pork prices got out of hand, the Agriculture Department and other government agencies involved held marathon meetings to find out what caused such escalation and how it can be stopped.

Two bright ideas came out of such meetings: First, to import 5,000 or 10,000 metric tons of pork products in the interim to ensure stable supply for Metro Manila until June and second, to come up with a market intervention where medium and large scale farms will supply a portion of their output to viajeros using the slaughterhouses as their jump-off point.

Buencamino said that the idea of importing first 5,000 tons of pork – and another 5,000 tons in case this supply is not enough – may be ineffective.

Just like before, PAMPI was not invited to meetings on how the importations should be handled but was only told about the results, Buencamino said.

The fact that the hog raisers are resorting to every means to delay such importation or to disallow it altogether as it competes directly with their farm outputs – is already a farce.

Then the alternative of asking medium and big raisers to allocate a portion of their output for the viajeros (or those supplying only 5 to 10 heads in the market daily at very high farmgate prices) using the abattoir as the venue for getting their supplies is an erroneous reading of actual market situations.

The slaughterhouse is merely a place where the animals are killed and cleaned and nothing else. It does not even have any control on actual supplies from farms to retailers. Slaughterhouse operators do not deal with farmers but with hog traders or middlemen, Buencamino said.

Leaders of the hog raisers keep harping on their success in stopping the pig holiday from materializing but actual market supplies on the weekend that the "farm boycott" took place showed that it was a success.

Imagine, there was practically no pork in the wet markets for Friday to Sunday that first week of March, which led prices to go even berserk..

As PAMPI turns 15, its newly-elected officers will have to contend with the same issues on a more heated scale than past officers. But this shouldn't stop the new PAMPI officers from being more vigilant in its quest for ensuring consumer welfare above their own interests.

PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES

I. Cocktails		
II. Fellowship Dinner		
a) National Anthem	-	**Ms. Julie M. Manalo** Nenita Quality Foods Corp.
b) Doxology	-	**Ms. Susan Baller** Jaka Foods Processing Corp.
III. Program Proper		
a) Welcome Remarks	-	**Mr. Ted Po** The Pacific Meat Co., Inc.
b) Introduction of Members	-	**Ms. Chiqui S. Diy** PAMPI Secretariat
c) Introduction of Guests	-	**Mr. Francisco J. Buencamino** Executive Director, PAMPI
d) Presentation of Newly Elected Officers and Directors	-	**Ms. Angie Castillo** Del Monte Phils., Inc.
e) Induction	-	**Hon. Senator Ramon Magsaysay, Jr.** Chairman, Committee on Food & Agriculture
f) Acceptance Speech	-	**Mr. Felix O. Tiukinhoy, Jr.** President, PAMPI
g) Introduction of Guest of Honor & Inducting Officer	-	**Mr. Tony L. Zabaljauregui**
h) Keynote Speech	-	**Hon. Senator Ramon Magsaysay, Jr.**
i) Inspirational Talk	-	**Hon. Luis P. Lorenzo, Jr.** Secretary, Department of Agriculture
j) Closing Remarks	-	**Mr. Rex Agarrado** The Pacific Meat Co., Inc.
IV. Entertainment	-	**Mr. Vince Lahorra, Saxophonist** **Platinum Band**

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Ms. Angie Castillo, Del Monte Phils., Inc. **Ms. Chiqui Diy**, PAMPI Secretariat

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4 US contractors suffer grisly deaths in Iraq town

WASHINGTON—Washington vowed to stay the course in Iraq on Wednesday after four US contractors were killed and dragged through the streets in an incident that echoed a grisly 1993 attack on US soldiers in Somalia.

The four, ambushed by guerrillas as they drove through the Iraqi town of Falluja, worked for a private company called Blackwater USA that uses former US elite special operations forces to provide security services around the world.

A crowd of Iraqis set their vehicles ablaze, hurled stones into the burning wreckage and dragged the charred and mutilated bodies through the streets of the town, a center of resistance to the US-led occupation 50 km west of Baghdad.

Television footage of a similar incident in Somalia sickened Americans over the US mission there and was a factor in the decision to pull US forces from the African state.

US networks showed edited film of Wednesday's killings but did not include scenes of the bodies being dragged through the streets.

The White House said the attack, and a separate incident in which five US soldiers were killed by a roadside bomb near their convoy west of Baghdad, would not deter the United States from seeking to establish democracy in Iraq following the US invasion that toppled Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

"These are horrific attacks by people who are trying to prevent democracy from moving forward, but democracy is taking root," said White House spokesperson Scott McClellan, vowing that the United States would stick to a June 30 deadline to hand over power to an undefined transitional Iraqi government.

"We mourn the loss of life and there is an important effort that is well under way in Iraq to provide the Iraqi people freedom and democracy and we will not turn back from that effort," McClellan said.

The state department said the four men killed in Falluja were US citizens, but declined to provide more information.

Blackwater Security Consulting, a part of Blackwater USA, issued a statement confirming the four were its personnel but saying the "exact identities of the victims are not known."

The Moyock, North Carolina firm's Web site, which features a man in a black mask and reflective goggles and others in combat gear pointing weapons, says its staff are "renowned for dealing with high-risk situations and complex operations."

The site which advertises courses in sharpshooting, has an aerial photograph of what it called "the most comprehensive private tactical training facility in the United States" and boasts of providing "training and tactical solutions" around the world. *Reuters*

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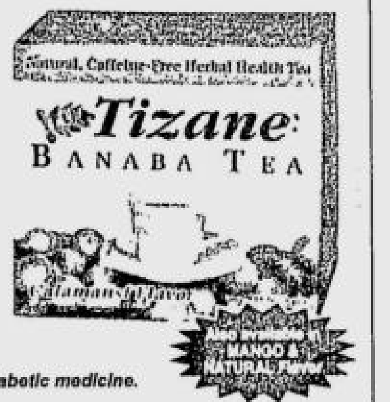

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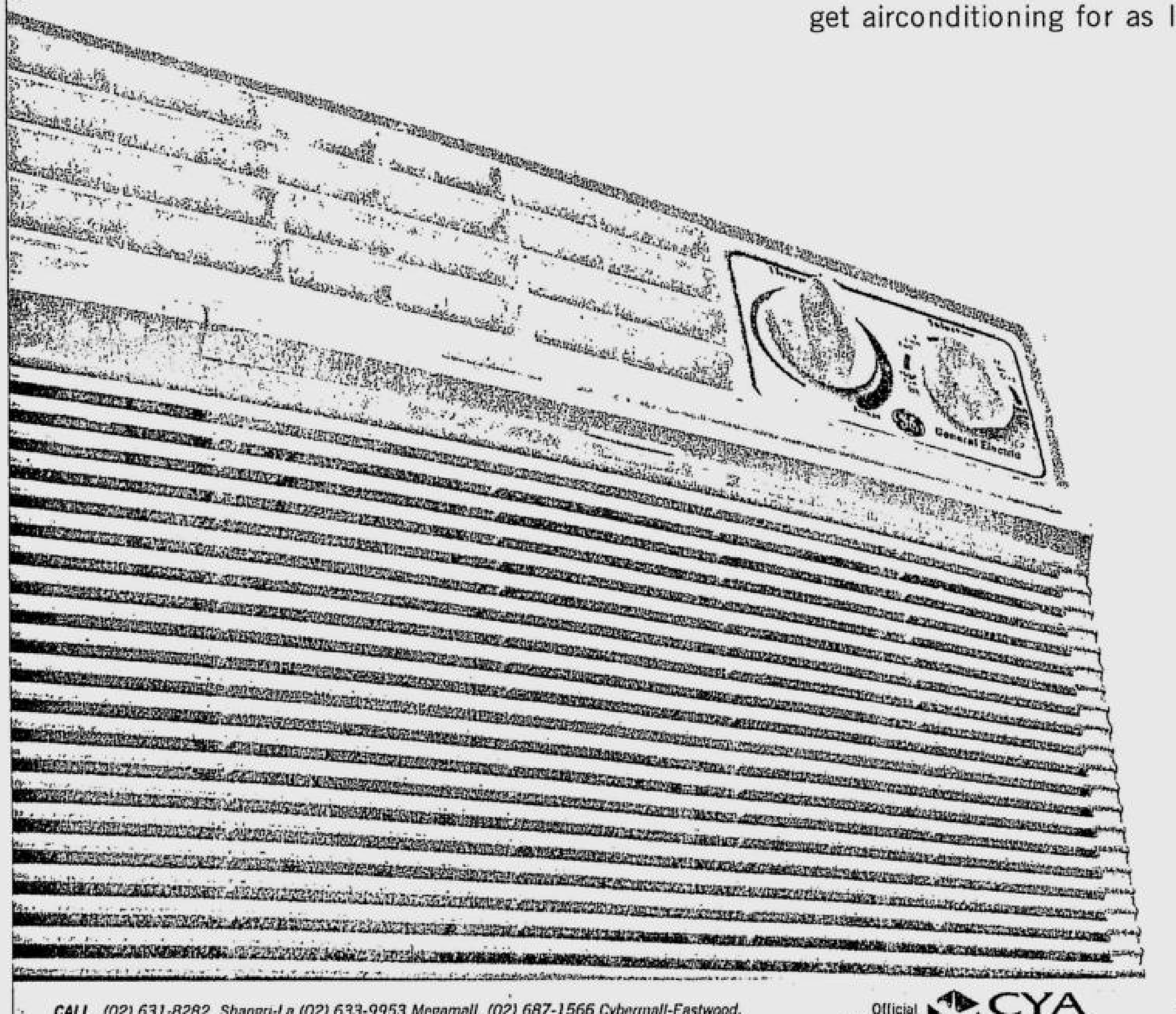

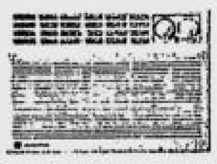

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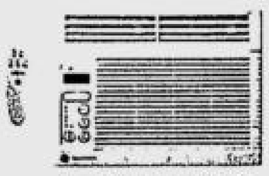

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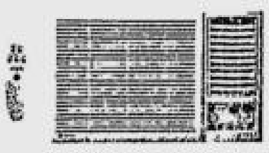

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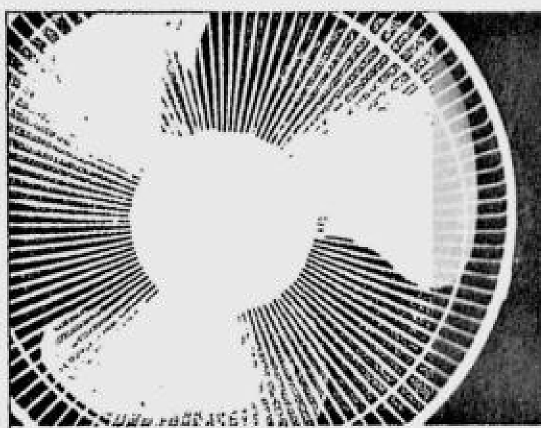

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Report: Bush pre-9/11 focus was on missiles, not terror

WASHINGTON—The White House's national security policy before the Sept. 11 attacks focused on the threat of long-range missiles, not on terrorism, The Washington Post said Thursday.

National security advisor Condoleezza Rice was to give a speech on Sept. 11, 2001, designed to promote missile defense as the cornerstone of a new national security strategy, said the daily citing former US officials who read the text.

Rice's speech, which the White House declined to release and was never delivered, criticized the administration of former US President Bill Clinton for not doing enough about the real threat of long-range missiles, the daily said.

"We need to worry about the suitcase bomb, the car bomb and the vial of sarin released in the subway," according to excerpts of the speech provided to the daily.

"(But) why put deadbolt locks on your doors and stock up on cans of mace and then decide to leave your windows open?"

The daily said the White House also refused to confirm the accuracy of the excerpts.

The administration of US President George W. Bush is under investigation for its antiterrorism policies before and after 9/11.

Rice is due to testify under oath to an independent panel which last week heard from former counterterrorism expert Richard Clarke, who slammed the Bush government for not taking terrorist groups like al-Qaida seriously and for focusing too much on Iraq in the aftermath of 9/11.

Rice's speech also mentioned terrorism, said the Post, but only as one of the dangers from rogue nations, such as Iraq, rather than from extremist groups.

The White House's deputy national security adviser for communications James Wilkinson told the Post that Bush's "commitment to fighting terrorism isn't measured by the number of speeches, but by the concrete actions taken to fight the threat."

"The first major foreign policy directive of this administration was the new strategy to eliminate al-Qaida that the White House ordered soon after taking office. It was eliminating al-Qaida, not missile defense, not Iraq, and not the (Anti-Ballistic Missile) Treaty," he said when asked by the daily about Rice's speech.

The Washington Post also said Thursday that Bush's top lawyer Alberto Gonzalez telephoned at least one Republican member of the 9/11 independent commission when the panel convened on March 24 to hear Clarke's testimony. *AFP*

Opec to cut oil output by 1M barrels per day

VIENNA—The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries will go ahead with a planned oil production cut of one million barrels per day, ministers said Wednesday, defying US calls for a delay to help rein in high energy prices.

Opec had been urged by importers to postpone the move with oil prices close to 13-year highs and gasoline prices at record peaks in the United States.

But Opec is worried that demand for crude oil will fall with the arrival of spring in the northern hemisphere and that it must act now to prevent a price collapse.

The 10 nations in Opec's quota system will implement a decision agreed on Feb. 10 in Algiers to reduce their official crude oil production from 24.5 million bpd to 23.5 million from April 1, said the energy ministers of Algeria, Qatar and Kuwait separately.

The decision was due to be announced formally at a press conference later Wednesday.

Opec President Indonesian Oil Minister Purnomo Yusgiantoro said at the Opec meeting that the cartel was "also concerned about the low value of the dollar and the effect this is having upon our petroleum revenues."

He said of the feared drop in seasonal demand: "In a sensitive marketing environment like oil, where psychology plays a prominent role, it is easy for a minor impulse to be fueled by speculation and develop into something much larger."

The Opec cut was "to send a signal to the market that we were prepared for this and would act in such a manner that would prevent severe downward pressure on the price and a protracted period of volatility" as had happened in the late 1990s. *AFP*

FORMER POW Jessica Lynch, whose wounding and rescue made her the Iraq war's most famous soldier, in photo taken March 22. AP

A year after, Lynch ponders fame, fate

By Gavin McCormick

CHARLESTON, West Virginia—Fame has come at a price for former prisoner of war Jessica Lynch.

Since the supply clerk's wounding and rescue made her the Iraq war's most famous soldier a year ago, well-wishers have been drawn to her at every public appearance, whether at the diner near her home or at the Golden Globe Awards in Beverly Hills.

"I'm just a country girl. It's something I'm not used to, and I probably never will be," the 20-year-old Lynch said. "I do want my life back to normal, because it's hard—it's so hard. But at the same time I'm like—wow, I get to go to New York, I get to go to Hollywood. I get to hang out with people like Britney and Leonardo."

With help from publicists, the young woman who joined the Army to see the world and receive an education has made a handful of appearances since last year's book tour for Rick Bragg's biography, "I Am A Soldier, Too."

Lynch, still a few weeks shy of the US legal drinking age of 21, won an award from Glamour magazine (where she met Britney Spears); rode in the Gator Bowl parade; starred at Gov. Bob Wise's State of the State speech; attended parties after the Golden Globes (where she met Leonardo DiCaprio); and took a three-day jaunt to the Bahamas after christening a cruise ship.

Personal questions

She tries to oblige every photo and autograph request, most of which come from young girls. But she has turned down scores of other requests, including offers to speak at schools across the country.

"I feel bad, but I can't do them all," Lynch said.

As she grapples with fame, she also struggles with questions both personal (When should I go to college? When should I get married?) and philosophical (Why did I survive when others didn't?).

"I mean, obviously, there has to be a reason," she said. "I don't know what it is yet. So I have to explore all these things to figure it out."

This month, Lynch will do the first of four events for Get Motivated, a national business seminar company that hires speakers such as former New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani and former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

Lynch's whirlwind started March 23, 2003, when her 507th Maintenance Company got lost in the southern Iraqi desert and was ambushed in Nasiriyah.

With her vehicle stalled and her rifle jammed, Pfc. Lynch hopped into a Humvee driven by her best friend, Pfc. Lori Piestewa. The vehicle was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade and crashed. The 11 American soldiers who died in the ambush included Piestewa and three others in the Humvee.

Spinal fractures

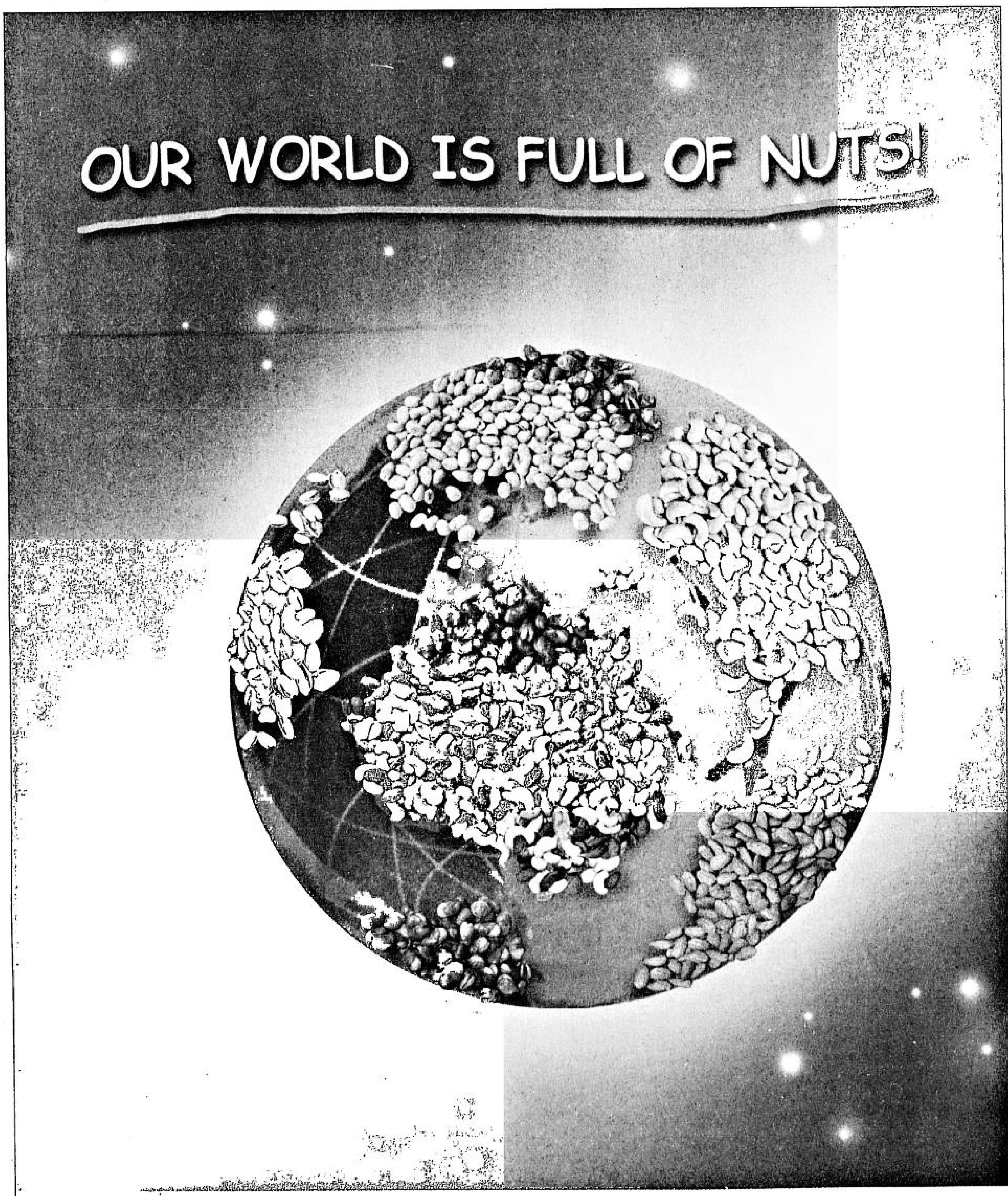
Lynch suffered two spinal fractures, nerve damage and a shattered right arm, right foot and left leg. According to medical records cited in her biography, she was also sodomized, apparently during a three-hour gap that she cannot recall.

Her videotaped rescue by special forces from a Nasiriyah hospital on April 1 branded Lynch a hero at a time the US war effort seemed bogged down.

It also stirred complaints of US government media manipulation. Early reports—never stemming from Lynch or her family and later disproved—had the flyweight, blonde, former Wirt County Miss Congeniality suffering knife and bullet wounds while fighting off attackers until running out of ammunition.

Lynch agreed to the AP interview on condition that she not be asked about her Iraq ordeal. She repeated her charge that she felt "kind of used" by officials who spread false stories about her. But she declined to discuss the politics of the Iraq war.

Still hobbled and using a cane, Lynch spends several hours a day in rehabilitation therapy. Nerve damage has left her unable to feel her left foot, though doctors hope she will regain its full use. The Army awarded her a medical retirement and an 80 percent disability pension. AP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Karadzic eludes raid

KARADZIC

PALE, Bosnia—Nato peacekeepers hunting war crimes fugitive Radovan Karadzic mounted a night-time swoop on his old stronghold Pale on Thursday, seriously wounding a priest and his son but failing to find Karadzic.

Around 40 American, British, German and Slovenian troops aboard helicopters and vehicles took part in the raid, which centered on the northern town of Tuzla's Serbian Orthdox church and nearby priest's accommodation.

SFOR has in recent months intensified its seven-year hunt for Karadzic, wanted by the United Nations war crimes tribunal in The Hague on two charges of genocide for the slaughter of Bosnian Muslims in the 1992-95 war.

"We did not find the individual we were looking for," said Capt. Dave Sullivan, spokesperson for the Nato-led force SFOR.

"We conducted a focused operation... to detain Radovan Karadzic. We searched an administrative accommodation building but we failed to locate him.

"Despite precautions, two civilians were injured inside the house. They received blast injuries," Sullivan said.

The wife of Father Jeremija Starovlah said her husband and son were injured when troops burst into the family home next to the church.

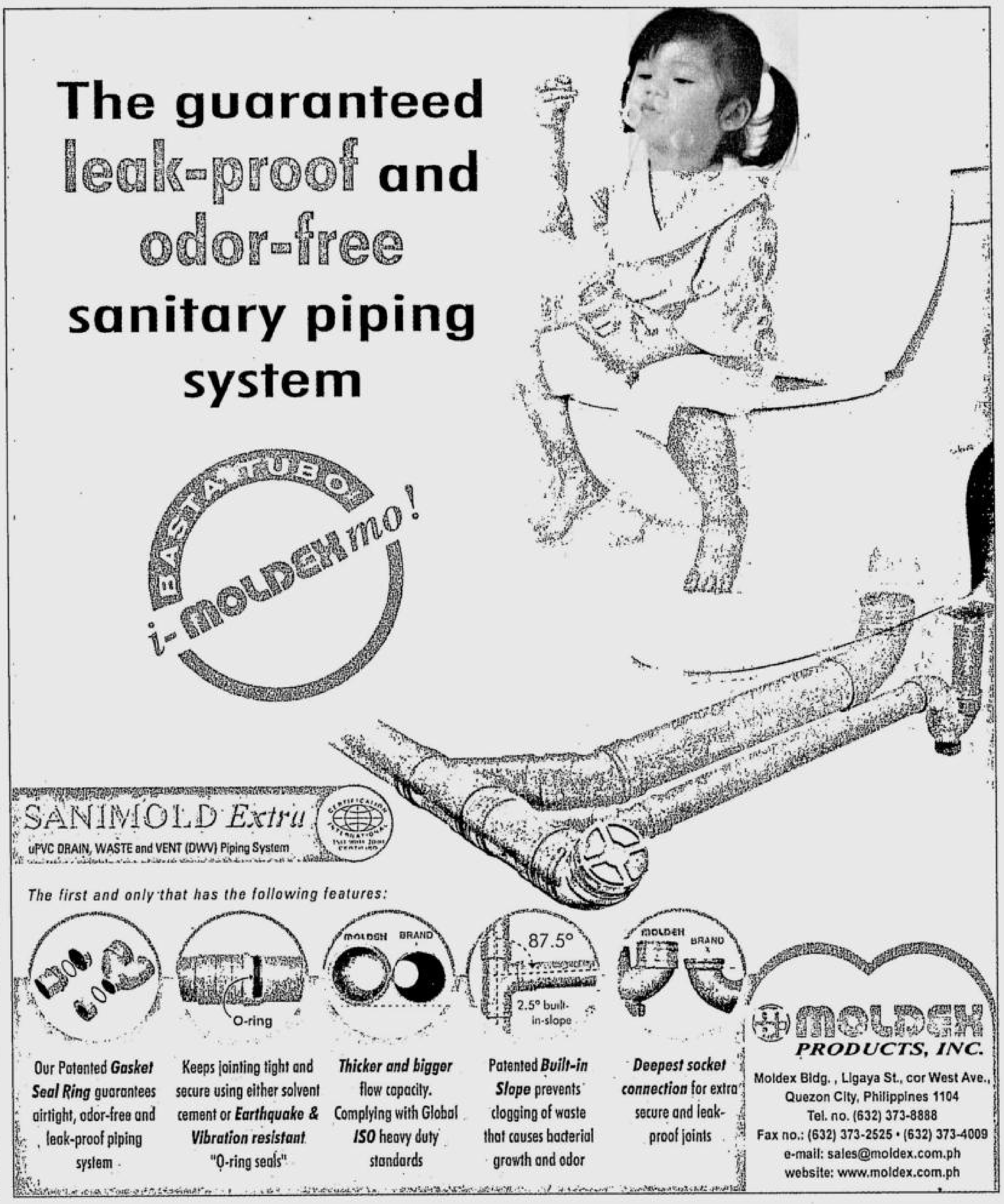
"We were awoken by shooting. Soldiers burst into the house and immediately took them to another room... a soldier put a gun to my head. I heard my husband cry for help, but I could do nothing."

It appeared to be the first time that the Karadzic manhunt had resulted in injury to civilians and it was likely to anger Bosnian Serbs, many of whom view Karadzic as a hero and the church as inviolate.

Doctors in Tuzla were fighting for the lives of the two who were in "critical condition," a hospital spokesperson said.

An SFOR spokesperson said the two were flown by helicopter to a US base near Tuzla and then taken to the city's hospital.

Both of them suffered heavy injuries to the head and the priest also had multiple fractures, hospital spokesperson Amra Odobasic said. "Their lives are still in danger," she added. *Reuters*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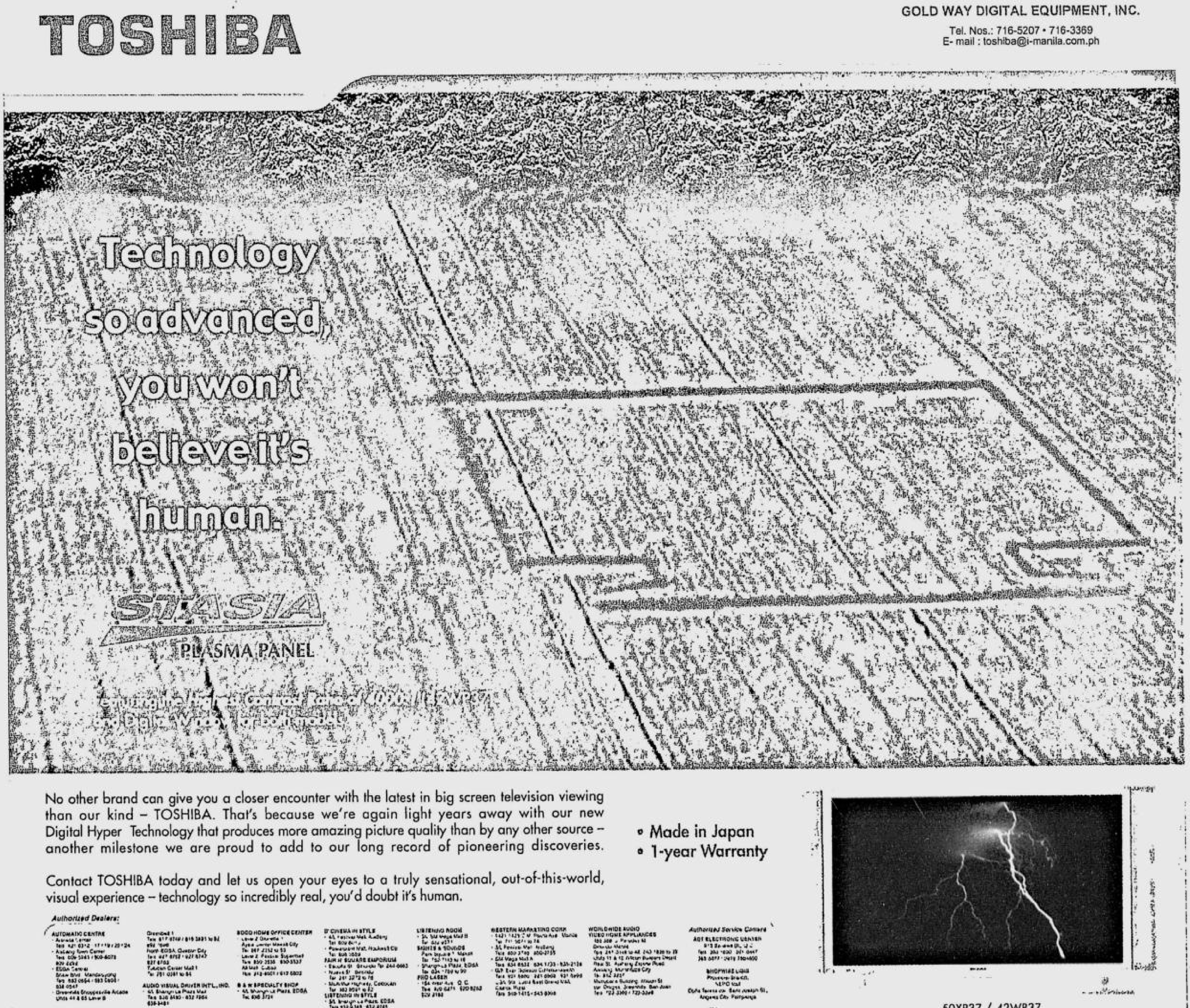
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EDITORIALS

Into the bedroom. . .

BECAUSE he's the vice-presidential frontrunner, Sen. Noli de Castro has had more than his fair share of brickbats and mud. Aside from white papers that purport to expose his alleged shady dealings in the press before he joined the Senate, he has had to suffer the ignominy of his private life exposed and skewered in the media because of a past he may want to forget—his first marriage that hit the rocks and was annulled.

Not that he was hiding it. Against the accusation of his wife that he abandoned his first family, he presented his daughter by her to show he has not been remiss in his paternal duties. His is clearly a domestic spat better left to the family hearth.

Sen. John Osmeña may be cruising to another victory in the Senate, but he too has found himself the target of negative campaigning. Because he's not a tyro like De Castro, Osmeña is taking it all in stride. But he, too, must be a bit bewildered that someone has come forward to accuse him of homosexual advances, an unsavory allegation not because homosexuality is despicable, but because the charge strikes at the extremely sensitive matter of sexual orientation, which puts any candidate on the spot, whether or not he is gay.

To be sure, sexual orientation is not an election issue. Even the Catholic Church, which considers homosexuality an objective disorder, will not make an issue out of it. If she does, she will do so in the context of social morality, how a private act may impair public service. If the Church was particularly hard on Joseph Estrada's womanizing, it was because his private philandering took its toll on the public coffers. Hetero or homo, Estrada would have gotten the same lashing from the Church.

But the fact that the campaign has started to dredge private matters is as worrisome as the administration and the opposition trading "tonto's" and "tonta's." The latter shows the verbal deterioration of the electoral discourse. The former shows the material or intellectual corrosion of the quality of our politics.

And into the gutter

IT seems privacy has become a candidate's privation. To be sure, while De Castro and Osmeña have a right to privacy, they are public figures, nay, they are public officials. And in running for either higher office or more of the same, they signal their intention to subject themselves to questions about their private lives that may have some bearing on their public personas and acts. In short, they are fair game to personal attacks.

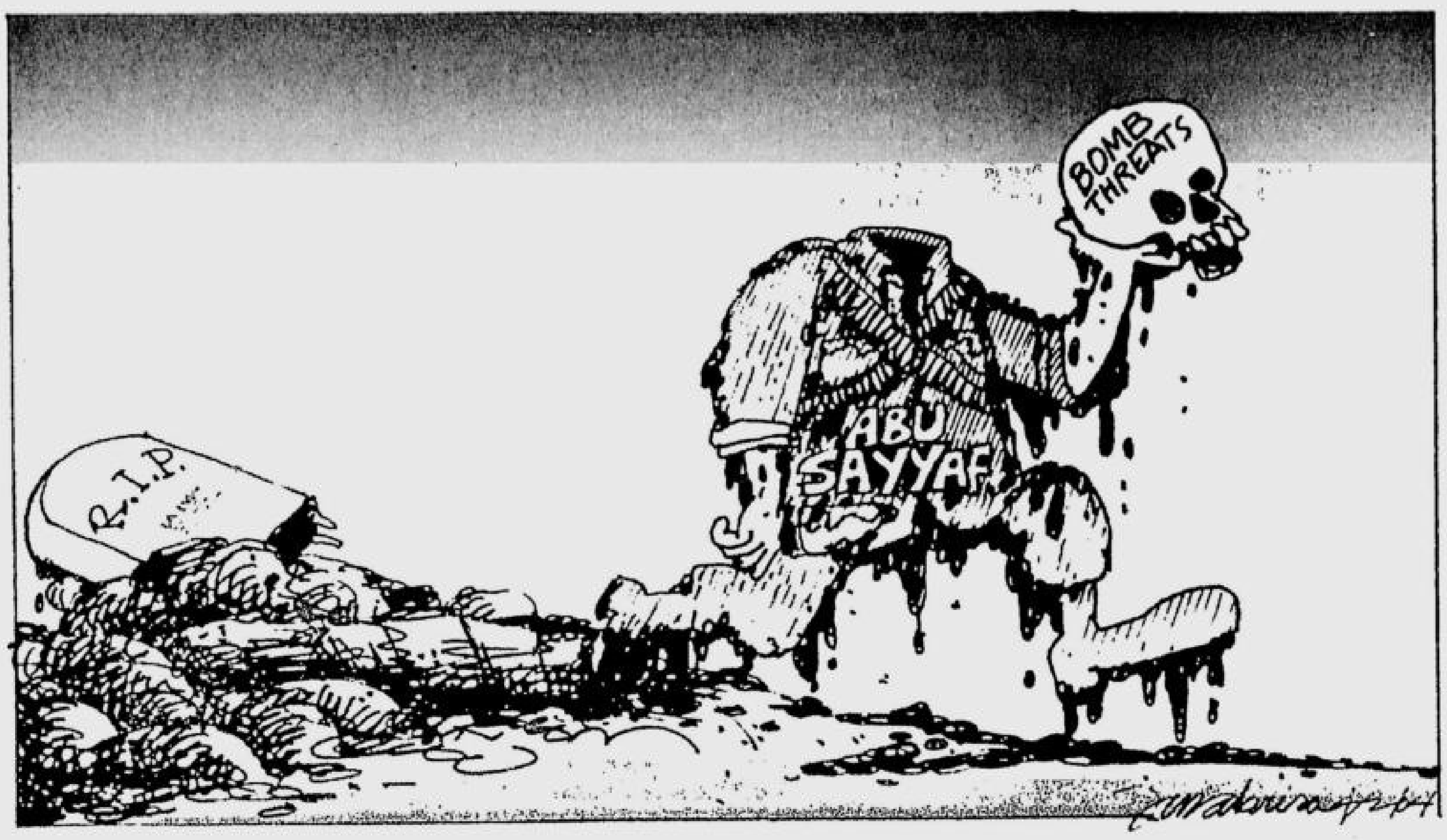
But how does the electorate discern which personal issues have a bearing on public morality? How does it distinguish between relevant mud and a smear job? When does it decide enough is enough?

It's really hard to tell. First of all, the public should take such accusations with a grain of salt. It cannot do otherwise because they are made during an election campaign that reaches boiling point day by day. For the public to fall for them easily is risky; it may find itself scalded in the end.

Second, the electorate should be warned that rabid personal accusations against candidates are most of the time made in order to polarize the electorate.

In the end, the fact that unsavory personal accusations are being made left and right should make the electorate take a second look at the quality of our democratic discourse. Quite personal mud is being excavated in place of the hard political issues that should be brought out in the first place: Does De Castro really have a college diploma, as he claims? Taking into consideration his background in broadcast journalism and his short stint in the Senate, does he have the goods to be vice president? And what about Osmeña? Like De Castro, his legislative record should be evaluated. Is it one with a governing principle, a vision of relevant legislation? Or is it one motivated by pique and spite? We are sure that if these questions were asked, the two lawmakers would not mind responding with intelligence.

But, alas, intelligence—this is what the campaign has so far lacked. Because the campaign has chosen to reduce issues to the personal and the peripheral, it has not risen above the merely banal and carnal. Without intelligence and discernment, our election has sadly reached this point—an archeology of the gutter.



BI releases illegally detained German

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

REMEMBER the case of Alfred Lehnert, the German national who was arrested and illegally detained by the Bureau of Immigration when he went to its office in Cebu to follow up his visa renewal? Lehnert has been living in the Philippines for the last 10 years and is married to a Filipina with whom he has a 7-year-old daughter. Somebody has filed an adultery case against him (Lehnert claims it was a frame up by a person trying to extort money from him) for which reason he was detained. When his case was published in this column in the third week of March, he was in his 17th month of detention without any trial or hearing.

Well, he has already been released. The Supreme Court ordered his release. The law and the Supreme Court have repeated in many cases that only a judge can order the arrest of a person. The only exceptions are the immigration commissioner and the President, but only to implement a final order of deportation of a foreigner and only after that person is given due process. Lehnert was arrested and detained by virtue of a mission order issued by then Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo. No hearing for his deportation was ever held. Neither was he deported, instead he was made to fester in the BI detention cell in Bicutan until the Supreme Court ordered his release.

Last March 23, the new commissioner, Alipio Fernandez Jr., ordered Lehnert's release. A few days later, he asked to see me. He passed on to me a report on Lehnert's case by Special Prosecutor Zaniah V. Siton. The report justifies the German's arrest, the denial of bail, and his continued detention.

The report tries to make the BI appear blameless for the acts declared illegal by the courts. It cites technicalities, rules and provisions of law to justify Lehnert's incarceration. A close reading, however, will reveal why so many foreigners are languishing in BI detention centers for long periods when the purpose of detention is to deport them. BI people may be erroneously bending the rules.

For example, the report says that preliminary investigation on the deportation proceeding was held on Sept. 18, 2002. The complainant appeared with his counsel and submitted his supporting documents. "Respondent did not appear despite notice," the report said.

But Lehnert, when he came to see me at the Manila Hotel last Monday, said he never received any notice. Litigants are usually given another chance when they don't appear at hearings. Not Lehnert.

"For not complying with a lawful order issued by the Bureau for him to appear at the hearing of his case," the report said, "a mission order was issued against the subject."

The mission order said only to investigate Lehnert, not arrest him immediately. A foreigner can be arrested only when there is a final order of deportation after due process. Due process means "after hearing his side." The BI never heard his side.

Nevertheless, he was arrested on Sept. 27, 2002 when he went to the BI office to follow up papers.

It was not until Oct. 9, 2002 that the case was transmitted to the Board of Special Inquiry together with the memorandum for the prosecution—but none, mind you, from the defense. In other words, Lehnert was arrested and detained before there was any formal investigation and before his side was heard. The Supreme Court has declared many times that a foreigner can be arrested only "when there is a final order of deportation after due process."

On Nov. 8, 2002, a petition for bail was filed by Lehnert's counsel but this was denied by Commissioner Domingo "for failure of petitioner to submit any document in support of his petition."

Lehnert's counsel filed a motion for reconsideration on the following grounds:

"1. Under the Constitution the respondent has a right to post bail since the offense with which he is charged is punishable merely by prison correccional.

"2. Respondent should be informed which documents are needed by the Bureau and should be given ample time to secure the same."

The motion was denied. Said the denial order:

"Aliens in deportation proceedings have no inherent right to bail." (Wrong. The Supreme Court has ruled that aliens have the same right to due process as Filipino citizens as provided by the Bill of Rights of our Constitution.)… It is incumbent upon (petitioner) to produce whatever documents which would substantiate the grounds raised in the petition."

The order also stated: "the Board of Commissioners already issued an order of deportation against the respondent…The Rules of Deportation to Govern Deportation Proceedings provides that 'No bail shall be allowed if there is already a deportation order by the Board of Commissioners.'"

Wait a minute, how can there be a deportation order when there is no hearing yet? The subject's side has not been heard yet. Where is the "due process" mandated by the Constitution?

But at any rate, Lehnert filed a petition for habeas corpus with the Regional Trial Court of Mandaue City, which was granted. But the BI appealed to the Court of Appeals. The CA denied the appeal. The BI went to the Supreme Court. On Feb. 26, 2004, the tribunal denied the petition for review and ordered Lehnert's release from BI custody.

On March 23, Commissioner Fernandez ordered the release of Lehnert.

I want to make clear, however, that the illegal arrest and detention of Lehnert was done before Fernandez took over as immigration commissioner. He assumed the position only a couple of months ago when Domingo resigned to run for governor of Pampanga.

Wag the dog, Part Nth

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

EVEN if it were true that the GMA government managed to stop a "Madrid-level" attack on Metro Manila, what of it? If it hadn't been for the GMA government, there would be no "Madrid-level" threat on Metro Manila in the first place.

That is what the Spanish voters rightly argued in the Spanish elections last month.

Jose Ma. Aznar was the president who turned Spain away from the path it had taken over the last couple of decades—which was to maintain close ties with its European Union neighbors—to embrace George W. Bush's Iraq invasion. He it was too who tried to make Spaniards forget that the United States was the superpower that supported fascism in Spain under Generalismo Francisco Franco—the same superpower which now proposes to bring democracy to Iraq on the wings of cluster bombs—which kept Spain among the most backward countries in Europe for four decades.

The political pundits of course were quick to say the 3/11 bombings in Madrid would turn the tide in Aznar's favor. The bombings, which took place in train stations, killed about 200 people and injured 1,400 more. Some pointed to ETA, the Basque separatist movement, others to the al-Qaida. But whoever was responsible, the pundits said, Aznar would get a flood of sympathy votes, having been vindicated in his decision to join the United States in fighting terrorists.

Well, the Spanish voters knew better. They knew exactly whom to blame for the bombings. They knew who brought war into their homes when they could have lived in peace with others. They knew who brought strife into their land when they could have lived in peace with others.

When the smoke cleared, Aznar was not only out of power, the Socialists were. They were the ones who had bitterly opposed the tack he had taken.

The same thing could happen here, GMA herself reminding the voters, who have pretty much forgotten how she led them down the path to ruin, of it. Particularly the overseas ones in the Arab countries who have been trying to make their hosts forget it. Of course no explosions have taken place in Manila and no one has died but that is not something the public can thank GMA for.

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is the President who turned this country away from the path it has taken over the last several decades—that of maintaining close relations with the Non-aligned Movement and the Group of 77—to embrace George Bush's "war against terror." She it is who has tried to make Filipinos forget that the United States was the one superpower who seized the country at the turn of the 19th century and propped up the dictatorship of one Ferdinand Marcos toward the end of the 20th—which has made the Philippines the most backward country in Southeast Asia today—the same superpower which now proposes to light the torch of freedom upon the world.

She it is who has made us a magnet for terrorist attacks, quite apart from a magnet for such epithets as "terrorist-coddler," which Bush's own Republican Party has called us.

A person who is rescued from drowning by someone who pushed him in the canal in the first place will not thank his rescuer. He will curse him to high heaven. Or, as in the case of elections, he will throw him—or her—out of power.

And that is if it is true at all that government prevented a "Madrid-level attack" on this country. I myself have been wondering when the GMA camp would use that card. It is a risky one, as the events in Spain show, and testifies to a creeping sense of alarm, if not desperation, among its ranks. It has "wag the dog," or a pure fabrication, mounted with elaborate, movie-type production values, written all over it.

It is a tired formula, or as the Tagalog so well puts it, *bumenta na 'yan*, the movie has had its run. To buy the new twist in this old plot, you have to submit to a brain surgery. Why would the Abu Sayyaf, which has been depicted as a group with an appetite only for making money by kidnapping, suddenly discover the joys of ideological submersion and a capacity for self-immolation? GMA and Gen. Narciso Abaya say the group has now turned from kidnapping to bombing. They do not say why. Even B movies with bad plots make it a point to give a reasonably believable motive for the bad guys. This one does not. Why should a group that has made a living kidnapping tourists, local and foreign, and who can't seem to be obliterated from the face of the earth by the combined Armed Forces of the Philippines and visiting American special operations teams, give all that up for a life of martyrdom?

In fact, why should government's intelligence, which has so far shown only the lack of it, unable as it has been to detect Panfilo Lacson's drug connections and property in San Francisco, suddenly discover a talent for uncovering a plot to bomb Manila Madrid-style at the same time the jeepney drivers were planning to wage a transport strike? Indeed, at the same time the other presidential candidates were planning to sign a covenant condemning GMA's use of public funds to campaign?

The answer is obvious: **Because** the drivers were planning to go on strike, and **because** the other presidential candidates were about to sign a covenant protesting GMA's use of taxpayers' money to campaign. They needed something to blunt the impact of the jeepney strike and GMA's rivals coming together to stop her from dipping her hands into the national pockets. The result was a bizarre story about a dark and evil plot to turn Metro Manila into a dump, as though it wasn't so already.

Well, media bit.

But in the end, all that story has going for it is the word of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo it happened. All it has going for it is GMA saying she rescued us from a fate worse than herself.

Now isn't she the same person who said she would not run?

Storm signals

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE STORM signals of economic turbulence lashing the country after the election—whoever will be president—have been raised to full mast by economists and the International Monetary Fund.

A group of economists warned at a recent economic forum that the country faced an economic crisis stemming from the burgeoning budget deficit. Averting the crisis, the economists suggested, would require an iron political will to push tough fiscal reforms in the taxation system.

None of the contenders for the presidency has focused on the deficit as the central issue of the election. Dr. Mario Lamberte, president of the Philippine Institute for Development Studies, led the call of the economists, mostly from the University of the Philippines School of Economics, for a definite fiscal policy to serve as the framework of the next administration.

Lamberte warned that the next economic crisis might blow up as early as next year—following a trend of seven-year cycles of crises that have hit the country from 1984 driven by political uncertainties—an element that surrounds the current election campaign. Among the economists were Raul Fabella, dean of the UP School of Economics, Professors Emmanuel de Dios, Solita Collas-Monsod and Milwida Guevara, former undersecretary of finance.

They said that, whatever platforms are presented by the presidential contenders, including President Macapagal-Arroyo, to curb the deficit, they would turn out to be empty promises unless the next government lifted collection efforts and trimmed expenditures. There was nothing novel or unheard of in the prescriptions the economists proposed—such as adjustment or indexation of the excise taxes on alcohol and cigarettes, and institutional reforms, including the creation of a National Revenue Authority which was stalled in the House of Representatives in the 12th Congress.

The important thing about the warnings of the economists is that they highlighted the fact that in the current election debate, all contenders have avoided focusing on the most important issue of the election, the economy; training their sights instead on less important issues such as the government takeover of Maynilad Water, the welcome accorded to gambling tycoon, Stanley Ho, the refusal of Fernando Poe Jr. to debate on substantive election issues, and the silly question of whether Poe or Sen. Panfilo Lacson would give way to one another in forming an opposition united front. While the Maynilad and Ho controversies cannot be ignored completely, they are mainly issues of governance and when the storm clouds of economic disaster crash after the elections, the economic consequence of a crash would be so severe that it would determine the success or failure of the next government.

The question that faces the voters is who among the contenders is best prepared to handle the deficit issue and can summon the political will to push fiscal reforms, many of which are unpalatable. Although the Macapagal administration has addressed the issue and has shown it has a good understanding of the problem, it has achieved only moderate success as its will flagged when the reform measures met resistance in Congress.

The economists are doing the nation a service by acting to refocus the attention of the public, and that of the presidential candidates, on the priority issue of the economy, but sadly they are not being heeded. The main reason why their warnings are bouncing off the heads of the public and the candidates is that economics is a dismal discipline and economists are regarded as messengers of doom and bearers of bad news.

The economic gloom painted by the economists was further amplified by the IMF which, in its March 30 report, echoed the outlook of the UP economists. It warned the government to curb the swelling deficit and improve revenue collection. It said the Philippines is likely to benefit from global economic recovery, but the uncertain political environment would be a major stumbling block to growth.

The IMF expects the gross domestic product to grow only 4.5 percent this year, below the government's target of 4.9 percent and 5.8 percent. It said, "The economic outlook for the Philippines is likely to remain subject to considerable uncertainty in the period ahead of the election, which brings downside risks to the outlook."

The uncertainty echoes were also expressed by Filipino businessmen and by the investors monitoring investment prospects in the country. The concern arises from the fact that the election is closely contested, that most candidates have not spelled out clearly their economic policy and that, while the IMF wished the Macapagal administration to have done better, it is not confident whether the next government would be more competent in managing the economy.

The most worrisome element is the inability of most presidential candidates to write well-defined economic platforms that address the deficit issue. Although the IMF acknowledged government efforts, it pointed out that the key area of weakness and vulnerability remains. The IMF underscored "the urgent need" to "implement comprehensive reforms, in order to set the economy on a high and sustainable growth trajectory, reduce still pervasive poverty, improve debt sustainability and the economy's resilience to adverse shocks."

Helen's story

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IN OBSERVANCE of the 10th anniversary of the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development, Likhaan convened Wednesday women from urban poor communities, women's groups, health NGOs and government representatives to a forum on "Renewing our Commitment to the ICPD Program of Action."

Part of the event was the presentation, by Likhaan executive director Junice Melgar, of a report on the state of Filipino women's health and rights, prepared to provide an NGO perspective on the same issues covered by the official government report to the "Cairo Plus Ten" conference.

But what makes Likhaan's report different from the usual position papers is that it is accompanied by a video presentation of stories told by "real women," most of them from urban poor communities where Likhaan provides services, on their experiences with pregnancy, contraception and abortion. Though I have yet to view the video, the stories were also compiled in a portfolio, and even by just reading the women's stories, one is moved immensely, jolted by the harsh realities they face, and touched by the women's determination to survive and prevail through their daunting circumstances.

There are six stories in the portfolio, all written in Filipino, and I'm reproducing one of them in this column, translated into English. It tells the story of Helen, and is entitled "Nakapanghihinayang," translated roughly into "Regretful."

* * *

HELEN always had normal deliveries. It was only on her ninth pregnancy that she was brought to the hospital because she had become delirious and her body had become bloated from her face to her thighs. She suffered from hypertension. It was in the hospital that her family found out that the fetus in her womb was already dead and decaying. Upon leaving the hospital, Helen was prescribed medications for her hypertension that she would have to take continuously. But Helen eventually stopped taking the medication because she didn't like taking medicines.

Helen never went through prenatal care because she didn't believe in doctors. She would even scold her daughter Edna whenever she brought her own children for vaccinations to the health center because Helen preferred to put her faith in faith healers than in the competence of doctors. She kept lead knives, and hung bullets and stingray tails (*buntot pagi*) which she said was to ward off vampires. At times she would even hide from the students roaming their neighborhood and offering free blood pressure tests, insisting the tests were not real.

As Edna tells it, the reason Helen lost faith in doctors may have been the deaths of two of her children due to bronchopneumonia at the hospital. She may have concluded that doctors didn't heal, but instead hastened one's death.

* * *

EDNA noticed many unusual changes in her mother the last time Helen got pregnant. She turned moody and began whipping her children. She would also frequently tell her children and husband that she was dying, especially during those times when her husband was jobless. She also became bloated although she never complained about any pain. In fact, she spent most of her time playing card games (*tong-its*) instead of taking to bed and resting. On Helen's eighth month, Edna advised her to consult a doctor but Helen only scolded her. Helen chose to put her faith in the village midwife (or traditional birth attendant) whom she relied on to assist at the birth.

It was 4 p.m. of July 11, 2001 when Helen experienced labor pains. She called for the midwife. The midwife began massaging her belly. With every contraction, the midwife would tell her to lie down and perform an internal exam on Helen without first putting on gloves. Then the midwife would tell her to stand up and move about, claiming it would speed up the baby's trip down the birth canal. Around eight that evening, blood started to flow out of Helen but the midwife said it wasn't yet time for the baby to be born. Helen passed out but the midwife revived her after 10 minutes. The midwife claimed Helen had just gotten dizzy. Around 10:30 p.m., Helen passed out again and was unconscious for much longer. Her husband began to slap her awake, tying rubber bands on her stiffened fingers. The midwife also tried to warm up her belly by rolling a bottle filled with hot water on it.

* * *

BY 11:30 p.m., Helen experienced excruciating pains. Blood and water flowed out of her but the birth attendant insisted it still wasn't time. By 12:45, Helen experienced painful cramps and finally her water broke. Helen was told to bear down and the baby's head appeared. The midwife urged Helen to bear down some more, but Helen groaned and said she was tired and was having a hard time breathing. When Edna asked her if she could still carry on, Helen said she was only dizzy. The midwife feared that Helen was suffering from hypertension, but when Edna asked her if she felt she could still deliver the baby, the midwife said, "if Helen can endure, so can I." Helen then said she could no longer go on.

Edna decided it was time to bring her mother to the hospital but Helen was suddenly enraged and began kicking her husband and the birth attendant. She was in hysterics. She refused to bear down and argued with her family. Then she lay on her side and held her legs together, muttering "Teban (her husband), I'm dying." Stung, her husband remarked: "Fine, just die. We'll just bury you. You're so stubborn and refuse to listen to us."

At that moment Edna realized her mother had passed away. Edna placed an ear next to Helen's lips and poked her eyes but got no reaction. Edna felt someone whispering to her that her mother was indeed dead.

Iloilo: From textile to sugar country

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

WHEN my teenage niece offers to prepare her father's coffee, I take note of the quantity of sugar and cream added to the steaming mug of brewed coffee, comparing this to the way my mother prepared coffee for my father—two teaspoons freeze-dried imported instant coffee in boiling water, garnished with an eighth of a teaspoon of sugar. Descended from a long line of diabetics I understood my father's caution. Failing numerous times to get the right amount of sugar into father's coffee, I advised him to just take it black since the sugar seemed so negligible anyway.

Having grown up this way I was shocked, on my first trip to Negros, to see my hosts dump a dozen teaspoons of sugar in a cup of coffee, without stirring it. They explained that when I was old enough to take coffee I must contribute to the sugar economy by doing the same. Times have changed since then; now people prefer sugar substitutes in coffee and diet soft drinks. No wonder the sugar industry is a pale shadow of what it once was in the late 19th century.

Passing Muelle Loney last weekend made me reread the personal correspondence of Nicholas Loney who is credited with turning Iloilo from marshland to the second most important port in the Philippines. Iloilo used to be the "Queen City of the South" with direct trade to Britain but that is now history. To see how this happened, I read Alfred McCoy's revisionist essay "A Queen Dies Slowly: The Rise and Fall of Iloilo City." Loney's personal correspondence provided a glimpse into his lonely life in 19th-century Jaro while McCoy put everything in context showing how Loney killed a thriving textile industry by importing machine-made cloth from Manchester and encouraged sugar plantations to provide cargo for empty ships returning to Britain. Such is globalization for you.

Textile weaving in Iloilo goes back to pre-Spanish times, probably bartered with Chinese merchants for the 14th-century oriental ceramics that continue to be excavated in Panay and Negros to this day. Its peak began in the 18th century and ended in the 19th century as shown by trade and population figures. Writing to his family in 1856 Loney described:

"Some of the native textures [textiles?] made in this province are very beautiful, that is, as to quality. The designs, though in some instances good, are not as a rule in very good taste, but it is surprising what admirable articles the women turn out on these rude looms. I have heard the number of looms in this province estimated at 50,000, but I think this is rather over the mark. All the female population appears to be employed in weaving, and in almost every house there are three or four looms, in some as many as a dozen; but I am wasting all my available writing ground on something very like dry statistics."

In a Consular report of 1857, Loney observed that: "Considering that the Philippines are essentially an agricultural rather than a manufacturing region, the textile productions of Iloilo may be said to have reached a remarkable degree of development. Nothing strikes the attention at the weekly fairs held at the different towns more than the attendance of native-made goods offered for sale; and the number of looms at work in most of the towns and villages also affords matter for surprise. Almost every family possesses one or two of these primitive-looking machines, with a simple apparatus formed on pieces of bamboo. In the majority of the houses of the mestizos, and the more well to do Bisayans, from six to a dozen looms are kept at work. I have heard the total number in this province computed at 60,000 and though these figures may rather over-represent the actual quantity, they cannot be much beyond it. All the weaving is done by women whose wages usually amounted from 75 cents to $1.50 per month. In general—a practice unfortunately too prevalent among the natives in every branch of labour—these wages are received for many months in advance, and the operatives frequently spend years—become virtually slaves for a long period—before paying off an originally trifling debt. There are other work women employed at intervals to set up the pattern in the looms, who earn from $1 to $1.50 per day in this manner. I should add that Capiz and Antique produce in a lesser degree than Iloilo a proportion of manufactured goods."

It was an intricate business. Women were held in debt and traders from Molo and Jaro made all the money selling the cloth in Manila and returning with: Batangas cotton, Chinese silk and machine-made British cloth of a value that equaled Iloilo textile exports to Manila. Panay textiles were so popular as exports, generating a sale of one million Mexican dollars at one point. Then Loney had local designs manufactured in Manchester, then flooded the market with them, thus sending the local industry to extinction. Cloth exports from Panay dwindled from a high of 30, 673 *piezas* in 1864 to a mere 5,100 *piezas* in 1873. Sugar replaced woven textiles changing the urban landscape forever. Population moved to sugar plantations and the port of Iloilo filled with foreign trading houses. The once busy looms became obsolete. There was a new boom industry but the province and people did not profit. Like hemp in Bicol, what occurred in Iloilo, to use historian Norman Owen's phrase, was simply "prosperity without progress."

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Spiritualities

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

WHO can ever forget that grand Hollywood production, "The Ten Commandments"? Think, too, of how it has influenced the way we look at ethics and morality as rules set in stone, literally handed down by God amid thunder and lightning, to be followed word for word, through all time.

I am sure there are similar interpretations of ethics in other religions, "being good" identified with religiosity, with rituals and prayers and following prescribed rules of what to do and what not to do accompanied by threats of reward (heaven) and punishment (hell or purgatory).

Lately, people have started to talk of the need for spirituality, which I think is a positive move in the way it refers to a world-view, a sense of right or wrong, that comes out of critical reflection and discernment. Unfortunately though, words have a way of becoming trivialized and sometimes I suspect people still mean "religiosity" when they talk about the need for "spirituality." I hear references, for example, to "Catholic spirituality," implying some absolute monolithic model, again handed down from the heavens like in a Hollywood film. This usage again defines one's own group as distinct from "others," usually implying one's own "spirituality" is superior to that of others.

In reality, there are many different Catholic spiritualities, and even more variations of Christian spiritualities, all of them ways of trying to be like Christ, or at least an aspect of Christ. These spiritualities are often associated with particular religious orders, reflecting the thinking of its founders who, in turn, were shaped by the historical circumstances in which they lived.

That's a lot of words to process, so let's get straight to some examples which I'm drawing from a book by Chris Lowney called "Heroic Leadership," which focuses on Jesuit spirituality (another column, I promise) and a lecture in 2002 by Ateneo's Fr. Bienvenido Nebres.

We start off with Benedictine spirituality. The Benedictine order was established in the 6th century, at a time when Europe was in ferment, slowly slipping into what has been called the Dark Ages, as Attila the Hun and his "barbaric" hordes destroyed what was left of the Roman Empire.

Benedictine spirituality sought to retreat from the chaos of the outside world, offering order through monastic life and discipline. Benedictine monks had to take a vow of stability, agreeing to stay in a monastic house until they died, their lives revolving around the rhythm of prayers, seven times a day from Matins at 2 a.m. to the Compline at 7 p.m.

It wasn't all prayer in the monasteries—the monks appreciated the dignity of labor, growing their own food and becoming quite self-sufficient. What was striking about the Benedictines was that they never really retreated from the world, their monasteries actually open to visitors and the outside world. Today, some Benedictines generate income through computer work, still faithful to their 6th century principle of Order through Labor.

The Franciscans emerged several centuries later, in the 12th century. Europe was moving out of the Dark Ages, with urban centers developing together with a new and affluent merchant class. Against this backdrop, we have Francis of Assisi developing a religious order that rejected the lifestyles of the rich, seeking to identify with the poor Christ. Franciscan spirituality comes closest to current New Age philosophies, with an emphasis on harmony with nature and simplicity. St. Francis' feast day is used, even today, for a blessing of pets, commemorating his own closeness to nature.

The Dominicans were contemporaries of the Franciscans, established literally as Ordo Praecatorium (O.P.), the Order of Preachers. They were established at a time when the Catholic Church was highly factionalized, with the groups attacking each other as heretics. The Order of Preachers was there to uphold The Faith. To this day, Dominican schools emphasize theology and philosophy, and are generally thought of as conservatives although there are in fact Dominicans today who believe that preaching includes defense of the poor and upholding social justice.

The Society of Jesus was established in the 16th century, at a time when Protestantism was rapidly growing, literally in protest against the Catholic religious' excesses. The Jesuits' founder was a former soldier, and drew from the military for many of his religious metaphors. Instead of retreating from the world, the Jesuits chose to engage the world, setting off for the most difficult and remote places.

Our schools—Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, or secular, as with government institutions—need to make students more conscious of the different spiritualities that exist, how they came about, and how the spiritualities need to respond to the needs of our times, as they did in the past.

I studied in Jesuit schools for 12 years and am realizing how this education continues to shape my view of the world, sometimes in paradoxical ways. I think of how my staying in the University of the Philippines and (so far) resisting invitations to join the Ateneo full-time could in fact be a function of this Jesuit upbringing and spirituality, this sense that we need to give priority to hardship areas like UP!

We might want to ask ourselves, too, if our problems as a nation might have come about because we have imbibed too little of spirituality, and too much of the trappings of religion with its emphasis on public performances of piety and charity, its holier-than-thou sectarianism, its intolerant and divisive dogmatism.

Our redemption as a nation may yet come as we learn from the different spiritualities that women and men have developed through the ages, responding to the needs of their times. Even limiting ourselves to the four "Catholic" spiritualities I just described, we will find they offer many lessons for life.

The Jesuits remind us that Christ did engage the world, often with great passion, but the Franciscans remind us Christ did all this without armies, without material wealth. (Some) Dominicans remind us we need to preach, but that Christ was most effective when he preached through deeds.

And the Benedictines, I will admit they do "tempt" me too with their reminders that while we might want to engage the world, we should guard against being engulfed by it, and that there will be times, too, when we need to build peace within our own homes and our hearts, without having to set up walls.

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LETTERS

ABS-CBN complains about Dolphy story

WE would like to take exception to the article entitled "Dolphy staying home for now" written by Marinel Cruz, which appeared on your front page last March 27.

Our basic complaint is that your paper has subjected us to a series of baseless, unfounded and obviously blatant misrepresentation of facts in what looks like a desperate and determined effort to link politics with the normal business activities of ABS-CBN. Being in the media business ourselves, it is our understanding that stories such as Dolphy's case should be verified with Dolphy himself or with us, since we are the only ones in a position to know the real score.

How can any responsible paper publish stories that give more credibility to what unnamed "quote" sources say, rather than the parties concerned? We can only surmise extreme malice on the part of the INQUIRER for insisting on maligning ABS-CBN for over a week now on what is clearly a non-story that has been proven baseless.

For the record, it is also not true, as your story stated last Saturday, March 27, that our chair and CEO, Eugenio Lopez III, ever said anything about simply talking about it in August. Neither did Lopez visit Dolphy in his home on Thursday night, as your story again reports, to discuss his future. None of these assertions were verified with us. We were not given a chance to outright deny the allegation at the first instance. Getting a reaction on the following day after the damage is done is not the same thing.

We also find it malicious of the INQUIRER to pick and choose portions of our statement and string them out of context in a vicious effort to find imagined inconsistencies. Again, for the record, we never denied meeting Dolphy in much the same way that we meet with all our stars and performers all the time to discuss many things related to their programs. But matters discussed are private to the parties involved, as can be expected in an industry where intellectual property rights are of primary concern. In addition, we have always recognized the need to protect the professional standing of our contract stars from gossip and intrigue.

We now wonder if the INQUIRER's thrust of providing the reading public "balanced news" is still among your newspaper's guiding principles. We always believed that as a media organization, you too, adhere to truth, fairness and responsibility in your news reporting.

—MALOLI ESPINOSA MANALASTAS,
vice president-government,
corporate affairs and PR,
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.,
Sgt. EA Esguerra Ave.
cor. Mother Ignacia Street,
Quezon City

THE PLANNED termination of Rodolfo "Dolphy" Quizon's show on ABS-CBN is not a "non-story" and does make for a political story because of his close relationship with presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr.

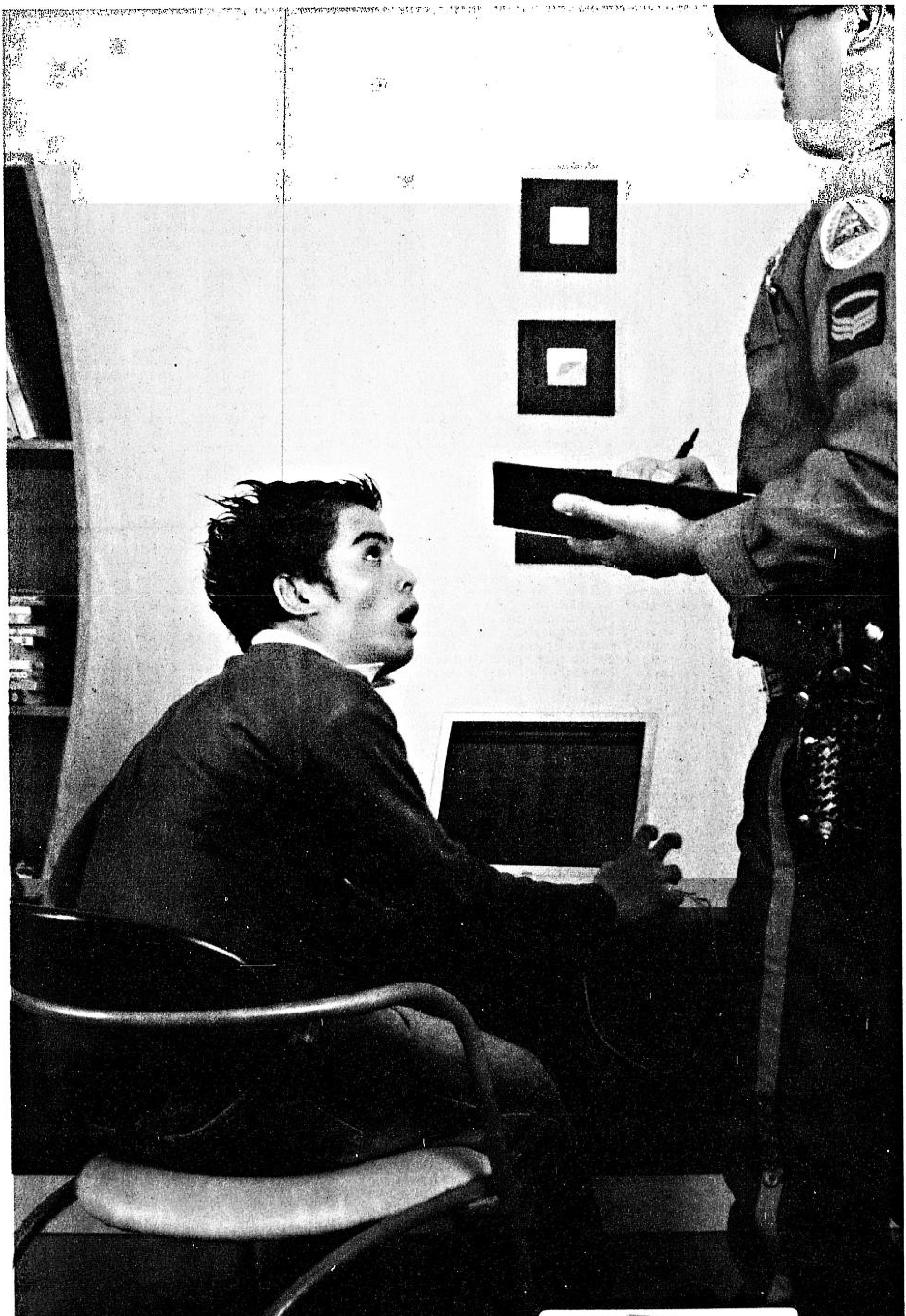
Quizon has expressed all-out support for Poe and has publicly campaigned for him—the first time that Quizon has done so for any elective candidate—and, as a reliable source pointed out, the only one among ABS-CBN's roster of stars to have done so.'

The "link" to politics was not an "act of extreme malice" on the part of the INQUIRER but was provided by a number of knowledgeable sources who requested anonymity and whose identities the INQUIRER was obliged to protect by standard journalistic practice.

The use of anonymous sources is an accepted practice in media. So long as the source is, in the judgment of the editor or executive producer (in the case of broadcast media), credible and there are independent means of confirming the truth of the statements made, people who speak on condition of anonymity are acceptable news sources.

The lone source used in the March 27 story was reliable. We had no reason to doubt the veracity of the source's statement. The same story carried the side of ABS-CBN denying that a meeting took place between Eugenio Lopez III and Quizon.

We understand the concern raised by ABS-CBN about an item that appeared in the March 21 news report that the Lopez-owned network is supporting President Macapagal-Arroyo, who is seeking another term. We regret our failure to make the appropriate attribution as to the source of the statement.—**The Editor**



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Dangerous advertisements

I WAS in Manila just last week and was surprised to find posters attached practically to every standing infrastructure known to man. I wonder if the Metro Manila Development Authority sees the dangers of those advertisements printed on tarpaulin material littering both sides of Edsa, on MRT posts and mounted on giant billboards atop building rooftops?

Those advertisements (mostly by mobile phone companies, television networks and yes, even politicians seeking votes) may distract drivers and keep their eyes off the road where their full attention should be focused.

Worse, some of these advertisements obscure important traffic signs and critical road marks. Although printed with the slick (thanks or no thanks to the latest large-scale printing technologies), they are also aesthetically baneful to the general city landscape, not to mention that they create problems with disposal (are these biodegradable, non-toxic?). What more, some of the steel supports where these advertisements are placed are not rigid enough nor structurally sound to stand strong winds come typhoon season or windy conditions.

Surely, we cannot wait for accidents to happen one after the other before our city managers act on these potential hazards. Isn't there some form of zoning or regulation regarding size, placement, and yes, safety imposed on these advertisement mediums?

—ERIC PARINGIT,
Tokyo Japan

Why trees and posters should never meet

THIS is with regard to the letter "Don't ban campaign posters on trees" (PDI, 3/19/04) sent by Manuel B. Japson of Eastern Samar.

Having confessed to being "not a tree specialist," Japson's observations that "trees can withstand adverse situations well" and that it is therefore all right to allow campaign materials to be nailed or stapled on trees are understandable, however erroneous they are.

True, gmelina trees, as cited in the letter, continue to thrive despite scheduled prunings to stay clear of Napocor lines. However, the trimmings done are limited to the secondary branches which are far from the trunk where the cambium is located. Oftentimes referred to in the vernacular as the tree's "arteries," the cambium functions as the food network of the tree and may result in illness or even death, when harmed. It is about one centimeter thick around the periphery of the trunk in between the bark and the tree's hardy section.

Ergo, pruning by and large poses no direct threat to the viability of a tree. *Malayo sa bituka, ika nga.*

Yet, experts on tree surgery would like to see a more educated way of pruning trees since trees are exposed to pathogens or infections if pruned improperly. Accordingly, cutting should be done in about 90 degrees and that a paint of coal tar should be applied immediately on the cut surface to prevent the entry of pathogens.

Japson also mentioned coconut trees that appear to be unaffected by the "three-inch deep foothold" carved by farmers to climb to the top. But, the coconut is not a tree but a palm. That misconception has persisted through the years so much so that it has earned the title "tree of life." As a palm, the trunk of the coconut "tree" is fibrous and its food network is located at the crown area. Little wonder why a coconut "tree" can withstand the worst punishment from the foothold carved into it by coconut farmers.

As to the de-barking of rubber trees which Japson described as beneficial to the health of the rubber trees, the process is not as simple as it seems. De-barkers in rubber tree plantations give special care not to touch the tree's cambium.

Further, subsequent excretion of latex during and after the de-barking serves as a form of "antiseptic" for the tree as it covers the exposed cambium, thereby preventing any infection. It should also be noted that it is a practice of de-barkers to allow the tree to recuperate from a newly debarked area by working at a different part of the tree in the next tapping season.

—GRACE F. FAVILA,
officer in charge,
Public Affairs Office,
Department of Environment
and Natural Resources,
Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City

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‘Jueteng’ rivalry seen behind murder of woman in Pampanga

GUAGUA, Pampanga—The brother of suspected jueteng lord Rodolfo “Bong” Pineda is said to be securing the limited areas left of their once wide illegal gambling turf, reports gathered by the INQUIRER showed.

This surfaced after the relatives of Emelita Manlulu, manager of suspected jueteng operator Melchor “Ngongo” Caluag in this town, tagged Ruben, the brother of Pineda, as a possible suspect in her murder.

Two men riding on a motorcycle shot and killed Manlulu, 43, at past 11 a.m. on Wednesday while she was on board a tricycle along the Sta. Filomena Road here.

The relatives said Manlulu had received threats through text messages from Ruben a week before she was killed.

A source in the Pineda family, reached by phone on Thursday, dismissed the allegation as “baseless and untrue.”

The source also stressed that Bong Pineda was “not anymore in the game.” Asked on the role of Ruben in the trade, the source declined to give answers.

Ruben, the relatives of Manlulu claimed, had wanted her to leave Caluag’s group, which she joined in the latter part of 2000.

At about the same time, the Senate was investigating the alleged jueteng protection money that Bong Pineda had supposedly given then President Joseph Estrada.

The allegation came from former Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis “Chavit” Singson, the whistleblower in what had been known as the “juetengate” scandal.

Manlulu, her relatives said, not only gathered her fellow *cabo* (area managers) still loyal to the Pinedas but also helped Caluag encroach into Pineda’s territory by taking along the former *cabo* of her father, now Councilor Jose Torres.

Torres admitted working as a jueteng manager from 1955 to 1985 under various operators, the last being Bong Pineda.

Ruben has reportedly taken over the trade since the ouster of Estrada in January 2001, operating the illegal numbers game mainly in western Pampanga and Bataan.

Manlulu’s late husband, Nestor, was also an employee of Bong Pineda. Nestor and two other men were killed by armed men belonging to a rival camp of Pineda in 1992.

While other relatives of Manlulu were quick in dragging Ruben to the crime, Torres, a reelectionist, reserved judgment until the police completed their investigation.

Supt. Audie Atienza, Guagua police chief, confirmed that Manlulu was Caluag’s “troubleshooter” in Guagua, the biggest town in Pampanga’s second district.

Both Caluag and Ruben Pineda, he said, operated the game in a “guerrilla” manner.

But Atienza said the police were “not convinced” of the jueteng turf war angle and had not included Ruben in the list of suspects.

“What has he to gain from the killing?” Atienza asked the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

The killing of Manlulu, he said, might be a “plain and simple case of robbery or holdup.” *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Violence mars protests vs top research agency execs

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

TIGBAUAN, Iloilo—Protesters yesterday scuffled with security guards of the Southeast Asian Development Center (Seafdec) during a protest rally calling for the ouster of two top officials of the center.

Michael Miranda, 31, said he was struck in the shoulder with a nightstick by a security guard whom he identified only as “Leonor.” He said the guard challenged the protesters to a fight before he struck him.

Lemuel Elarmo, chief of security of the center, said the protesters “taunted and insulted” the security guards when they passed their outpost at the gate of the compound. He denied that the guards had hit any of the protesters.

The two groups were pacified by members of the 1st Iloilo Mobile Group led by Supt. Mario Millaro, the group commander.

Miranda was among 500 Seafdec employees and residents of Barangay Buyu-an, where the center is based, who held a protest caravan to press for the ouster of Seafdec chief Rolando Platon and Dan Baliao, head of the administration and finance division.

The protesters, aboard 50 vehicles, were on their way back from the neighboring Guimbal town when the scuffle occurred. They earlier held a caravan to the Tigbauan town center before proceeding to Guimbal.

The protesters presented a manifesto containing their demands to Iloilo Rep. Oscar Garin in Guimbal.

Trader sues Abra gov, other execs over bidding controversy

By Artha Kira Paredes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BANGUED, Abra—A businessman has sued Gov. Vicente Valera and seven other officials before the Office of the Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon for the alleged irregularity in the recent bidding and awarding of an idle government property in Tayum town.

Engineer Selwyn Lao, president of the Wing An Construction and Development Corp., said his firm on Feb. 19 submitted the highest bid for the Cellophil Resources Corp. (CRC) property but the Abra provincial government awarded CRC to the lowest of three bidders, the Galaxy Ford Oceanair International Inc.

Lao said his company submitted a P65-million bid while Galaxy offered P55 million for the property. A third bidder, Joewood, submitted a bid of P55.8 million.

Aside from Valera, among those charged with violation of the anti-graft and corrupt practices act were Diosdado Cariño, acting officer of the provincial bids and awards committee (PBAC), and six other PBAC members who were not identified in the complaint.

But Cariño said while Wing An submitted the highest bid, it was not a guarantee that the CRC property would be awarded to the company.

He said the PBAC also considered the bidders’ project proposals.

In a complaint received by the Ombudsman on March 17, Lao also said Galaxy should have been disqualified because it violated a rule that the 10-percent required bond should be issued in cash or a manager’s check from a “reputable bank” in Abra.

The complaint said Galaxy deposited P5.5 million, representing 10 percent of its bid, in a bank in Valenzuela City.

But Cariño said the rules also said that the provincial government “reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to reject any or all bids for the protection of public interest and the preservation of public property.”

He said they did not disqualify Galaxy because the provincial government has also the right “to waive any formalities and to accept the bid considered most advantageous to the government.”

But Lao said: “We won the bid but the CRC was not awarded to us.”

He proposed to manufacture bamboo floor planks in the CRC property. He said the raw materials would come from Abra, Tarlac and Pangasinan.

He also proposed to venture in commercial bamboo plantations to supply the needs of his plant.

Galaxy proposed to build a manufacturing site for organic fertilizer.

The CRC is located in Barangay Gaddani in Tayum, 5 km from the capital town of Bangued.

It was established in 1977 and was first given a test run in 1979 as a pulp mill. The firm was also involved in the export of logs.

The plant was closed down in 1986 because of the sub-standard quality of its products and the protests of native Tinguians who said its operations affected the environment.

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Baguio mayor shuts door to Camp John Hay casino

BAGUIO CITY—With Camp John Hay again central to the political battle for Baguio mayor this year, reelectionist Mayor Bernardo Vergara surprised critics by declaring that a proposed Camp John Hay casino will not operate "while I am still mayor."

Responding to a question from the INQUIRER during a public presentation of the city's candidates, Vergara said he would not issue any business permit to Royal Highlands Gaming and Leisure Corp., which proposed to manage a state-run casino.

The turnabout pre-empted the crusade of Vergara's rival, Councilor Braulio Yaranon, and surprised even the developer of Camp John Hay.

Lawyer Georgina Alvarez, Camp John Hay Development Corp. (CJHDevco) senior vice president for legal affairs, said the company had "learned to live" with the political attacks that were hurled at it during elections.

She said since CJHDevco president Robert John Sobrepeña was put on the limelight for allegedly building a P40-million log cabin for deposed President Joseph Estrada, the developer had been vulnerable to almost all political exercises.

"Anything that occurs in John Hay affects every resident," Alvarez said.

But CJHDevco had not foreseen Vergara's contrary stance to the casino project.

Vergara, Baguio Rep. Mauricio Domogan and Vice Mayor Betty Lourdes Tabanda were out of the country when seven city councilors voted to uphold Royal Highlands' casino venture late last year.

But in passing a supporting resolution, the councilors negated the 19 conditions it imposed on the government and the CJHDevco, when the former American baseland was privatized.

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Yaranon said the council could not reverse the 19-point conditions because these were environmental contracts that had undergone public scrutiny.

The city issued Royal Highlands a provisional business permit in December last year, but the casino failed to open due to the opposition raised by the city's religious groups.

Camp John Hay sources said new investors from Fort Ilocandia and Metro Manila have since assumed the reins of Royal Highlands.

Vergara said Royal Highland's business permit would soon "lapse," but he did not explain why. CJHDevco said the firm's business permit should last a year. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo celebrates the expression of support given her by politicians and officials of Camarines Sur during her recent visit to the province. MALACAÑANG PHOTO

Sorsogon legislator denies bolting Gloria camp, says he's holding on

LEGAZPI CITY—Rep. Jose Solis Jr. of the second district of Sorsogon denied Wednesday reports that he was among the 90 local candidates who had abandoned President Macapagal-Arroyo and switched to the camp of Fernando Poe Jr.

The congressman reaffirmed his commitment to the President. "I am not leaving GMA, and I have no plans of leaving her," he said during his telephone call to the INQUIRER Wednesday.

"How could it happen when I'm always present in all of Ms Macapagal's campaign sorties here?" he said.

He added that he had been relentlessly campaigning for the President for about three months already.

According to him, it was impossible for him to transfer since he is the administration Lakas-CMD party chair in Sorsogon, his home province.

He also denied his presence during a gathering at the Club Filipino in San Juan, Metro Manila where the defectors convened. "It's unfair to be included when you're not even there."

Solis said he was apprehensive that the list of defectors might have been based on the previous list of Lakas leaders who were contemplating on shifting support to Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco of the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC), who had earlier announced his plan to run for President when President Macapagal also made the pronouncement that she was not running in the May 10 elections.

Currently, Solis said that even the NPC leaders are also scattered and have mostly shifted to Lakas.

For those who really switched parties, Sorsogon congressman said "you know, too late the hero are those switchers, no changes are being seen anyway."

Earlier reports have it that 90 local officials—consisting of congressmen, governors and mayors—from the administration coalition K-4 had abandoned President Macapagal-Arroyo and defected to the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino (KNP) after seeing better chances of getting elected with the opposition camp.

Poe's spokesperson and Sorsogon's 1st District Rep. Francis Escudero, in an interview, said from the NPC alone, there were at least 73 local leaders who transferred.

He, however, failed to confirm the number of Lakas party members who have transferred to them.

Escudero explained that those who attended the gathering in Club Filipino was only the first batch. *Ronnie Lorejo, Southern Luzon Bureau*

DENR prepares charges vs operators of illegal sand quarrying in Boracay

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Western Visayas is set to file charges against operators of illegal quarrying on Boracay Island.

The quarry operators and landowners failed to present permits and other documents to show that their operations were legal, said MGB regional director Leo Van Jugan in a meeting on March 22 with local government representatives in Aklan.

Jugan said they have been monitoring and inspecting quarry sites to ensure that the operators and landowners complied with the cease and desist order (CDO) issued by the MGB.

The MGB issued the CDO on Feb. 24 to Anita Omambong, Rey Tagua, Bernard Espana, Wilbec and Wilfredo Gelito, Omar Salido, Jose Sacapano and the International Builders Corp. (IBC), the private contractor of the Cagban jetty port.

Under Proclamation No. 1801 issued on Nov. 10, 1978, Boracay and several other small islands are classified as tourist zones where all forms of mining are prohibited.

Violators of the prohibition would be charge with violating Section 103 of Republic Act 7942. Theft of minerals carries a punishment of six months to six years imprisonment or a fine of P10,000 to P20,000, said lawyer Maria Lina Gonzaga, MGB legal officer in Western Visayas.

The MGB has found seven quarry sites in three villages of the island—Manoc-Manoc, Yapak and Balabag. Quarrying activities were ongoing in three sites when the MGB's three-member investigating team conducted an investigation on Feb. 20-22.

The sites were located in private lots, covering a total area of 11,241 square meters. The total volume of extracted sand reached 85,665 cubic meters, which was equivalent to 42,000 truckloads.

The limestone was used as land filling in the construction of resorts and restaurants and for a new jetty port in Cagban beach on the island, according to the MGB report.

The market value of the extracted limestone range from P500 to P850 per truckload, said Fely Cabrillos, senior environmental management specialist and member of the investigating team. The total volume extracted is estimated to cost P21 to P35.7 million.

The excavations, which started in 1999, have permanently damaged part of the landscape of the island, the country's premier tourist destination, according to the report. The dugout areas in some of the quarry sites reached an average of 15 meters deep.

PPA backs down from planned fee hike

OZAMIZ CITY—Facing stiff opposition from local businessmen, the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) has backed down on its plan to raise terminal fees collected on vehicles using the roll-on roll-off (RORO) service of its port here.

Alfonso Cusi, PPA general manager, announced the suspension of the plan in a letter to former Vice Mayor Elvira Tan, president of the Ozamiz City Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The fee hike was supposed to be implemented beginning this year after public consultations were conducted December last year. But it was held in abeyance pending an appeal to reconsider it that was lodged by businessmen through the chamber.

"This is a very welcome development that benefits motorists, vehicle owners, businessmen and the riding public," Tan said of the PPA decision.

Some 2,000 vehicles and 5,000 passengers pass through the port every day via the ferry boats plying a 15-minute sea route between Misamis Occidental and Lanao del Norte provinces.

Tan related that based on consultations conducted by the chamber, opposition to the terminal fee hike stems from the steep rate to be imposed and not necessarily from the idea of raising the rate or of collecting it in the first place.

The planned rate increase ranges from 250 percent to 900 percent, depending on the type of vehicles that would use the roll-on roll-off facility.

Based on the PPA plan, motorcycles, tricycles and scooters will be charged P50 for use of the RORO facility. The new rate is up by P45 from the current P5.

Vehicles with capacities of 16 passengers that included mini-vans, owner-type jeeps and Asian utility vehicles (AUVs) will be levied P100 for use of the facility. The new rate is P70 more than the current P30.

From the current rate of P55, vehicles with seating capacities of more than 16 will pay P200.

Large trucks, buses and heavy equipment will be paying P400. *Ryan Rosauro, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo celebrates the expression of support given her by politicians and officials of Camarines Sur during her recent visit to the province. MALACAÑANG PHOTO

Sorsogon legislator denies bolting Gloria camp, says he's holding on

LEGAZPI CITY—Rep. Jose Solis Jr. of the second district of Sorsogon denied Wednesday reports that he was among the 90 local candidates who had abandoned President Macapagal-Arroyo and switched to the camp of Fernando Poe Jr.

The congressman reaffirmed his commitment to the President. "I am not leaving GMA, and I have no plans of leaving her," he said during his telephone call to the INQUIRER Wednesday.

"How could it happen when I'm always present in all of Ms Macapagal's campaign sorties here?" he said.

He added that he had been relentlessly campaigning for the President for about three months already.

According to him, it was impossible for him to transfer since he is the administration Lakas-CMD party chair in Sorsogon, his home province.

He also denied his presence during a gathering at the Club Filipino in San Juan, Metro Manila where the defectors convened. "It's unfair to be included when you're not even there."

Solis said he was apprehensive that the list of defectors might have been based on the previous list of Lakas leaders who were contemplating on shifting support to Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco of the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC), who had earlier announced his plan to run for President when President Macapagal also made the pronouncement that she was not running in the May 10 elections.

Currently, Solis said that even the NPC leaders are also scattered and have mostly shifted to Lakas.

For those who really switched parties, Sorsogon congressman said "you know, too late the hero are those switchers, no changes are being seen anyway."

Earlier reports have it that 90 local officials—consisting of congressmen, governors and mayors—from the administration coalition K-4 had abandoned President Macapagal-Arroyo and defected to the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino (KNP) after seeing better chances of getting elected with the opposition camp.

Poe's spokesperson and Sorsogon's 1st District Rep. Francis Escudero, in an interview, said from the NPC alone, there were at least 73 local leaders who transferred.

He, however, failed to confirm the number of Lakas party members who have transferred to them.

Escudero explained that those who attended the gathering in Club Filipino was only the first batch. *Ronnie Lorejo, Southern Luzon Bureau*

DENR prepares charges vs operators of illegal sand quarrying in Boracay

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Western Visayas is set to file charges against operators of illegal quarrying on Boracay Island.

The quarry operators and landowners failed to present permits and other documents to show that their operations were legal, said MGB regional director Leo Van Jugan in a meeting on March 22 with local government representatives in Aklan.

Jugan said they have been monitoring and inspecting quarry sites to ensure that the operators and landowners complied with the cease and desist order (CDO) issued by the MGB.

The MGB issued the CDO on Feb. 24 to Anita Omambong, Rey Tagua, Bernard Espana, Wilbec and Wilfredo Gelito, Omar Salido, Jose Sacapano and the International Builders Corp. (IBC), the private contractor of the Cagban jetty port.

Under Proclamation No. 1801 issued on Nov. 10, 1978, Boracay and several other small islands are classified as tourist zones where all forms of mining are prohibited.

Violators of the prohibition would be charge with violating Section 103 of Republic Act 7942. Theft of minerals carries a punishment of six months to six years imprisonment or a fine of P10,000 to P20,000, said lawyer Maria Lina Gonzaga, MGB legal officer in Western Visayas.

The MGB has found seven quarry sites in three villages of the island—Manoc-Manoc, Yapak and Balabag. Quarrying activities were ongoing in three sites when the MGB's three-member investigating team conducted an investigation on Feb. 20-22.

The sites were located in private lots, covering a total area of 11,241 square meters. The total volume of extracted sand reached 85,665 cubic meters, which was equivalent to 42,000 truckloads.

The limestone was used as land filling in the construction of resorts and restaurants and for a new jetty port in Cagban beach on the island, according to the MGB report.

The market value of the extracted limestone range from P500 to P850 per truckload, said Fely Cabrillos, senior environmental management specialist and member of the investigating team. The total volume extracted is estimated to cost P21 to P35.7 million.

The excavations, which started in 1999, have permanently damaged part of the landscape of the island, the country's premier tourist destination, according to the report. The dugout areas in some of the quarry sites reached an average of 15 meters deep.

PPA backs down from planned fee hike

OZAMIZ CITY—Facing stiff opposition from local businessmen, the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) has backed down on its plan to raise terminal fees collected on vehicles using the roll-on roll-off (RORO) service of its port here.

Alfonso Cusi, PPA general manager, announced the suspension of the plan in a letter to former Vice Mayor Elvira Tan, president of the Ozamiz City Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The fee hike was supposed to be implemented beginning this year after public consultations were conducted December last year. But it was held in abeyance pending an appeal to reconsider it that was lodged by businessmen through the chamber.

"This is a very welcome development that benefits motorists, vehicle owners, businessmen and the riding public," Tan said of the PPA decision.

Some 2,000 vehicles and 5,000 passengers pass through the port every day via the ferry boats plying a 15-minute sea route between Misamis Occidental and Lanao del Norte provinces.

Tan related that based on consultations conducted by the chamber, opposition to the terminal fee hike stems from the steep rate to be imposed and not necessarily from the idea of raising the rate or of collecting it in the first place.

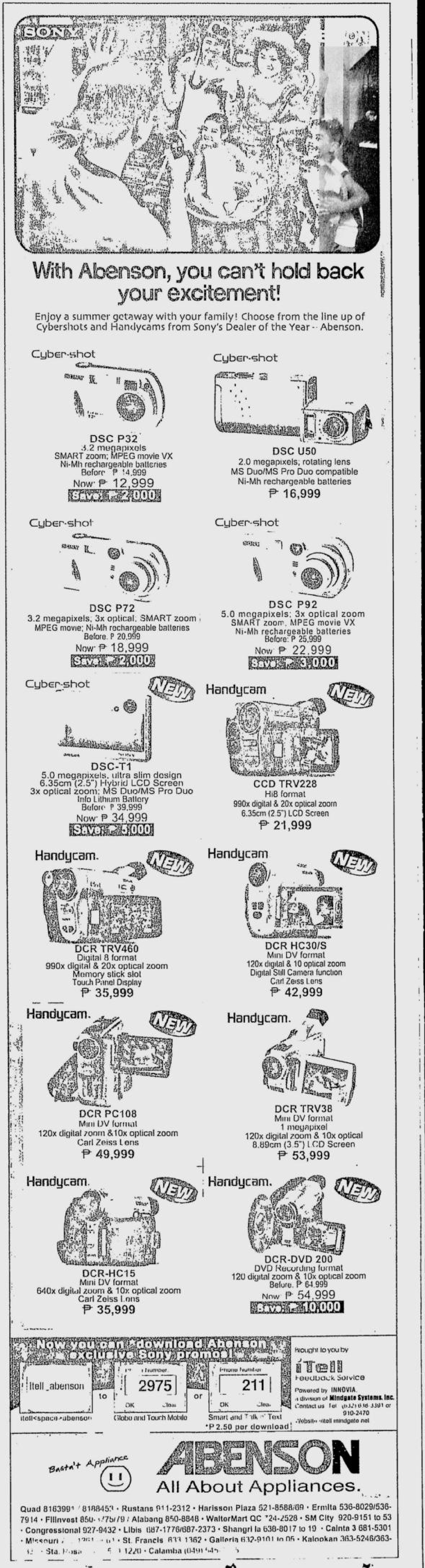
The planned rate increase ranges from 250 percent to 900 percent, depending on the type of vehicles that would use the roll-on roll-off facility.

Based on the PPA plan, motorcycles, tricycles and scooters will be charged P50 for use of the RORO facility. The new rate is up by P45 from the current P5.

Vehicles with capacities of 16 passengers that included mini-vans, owner-type jeeps and Asian utility vehicles (AUVs) will be levied P100 for use of the facility. The new rate is P70 more than the current P30.

From the current rate of P55, vehicles with seating capacities of more than 16 will pay P200.

Large trucks, buses and heavy equipment will be paying P400. *Ryan Rosauro, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



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Abu recruiting teenagers for bombing missions

From page A1

said some of the training sessions were held in an area protected by potent groups within the Moro Islamic Liberaton Front (MILF).

The MILF is the largest Moro group fighting to establish an Islamic state in the South. It has agreed to resume peace talks with the government this month to try to end a rebellion that has killed more than 120,000 people in over three decades.

The MILF has denied harboring Abu Sayyaf extremists.

"What I gathered from my source is that, aside from Janjalani, another foreigner was also rigidly conducting the training for new members, mostly young men whose ages range from 16 to 30 years old," the retired Armed Forces general said.

"Recently, we have sightings of other personalities of the ASG but not Janjalani," he added.

He said Janjalani appeared to be "well-protected."

The foreign trainer, said to be an *amir* himself, stays in a part of the training camp accessible only to a few guerrillas, according to the ex-general.

He said among the ASG leaders sighted was the group's spokesperson and supposed "brains," Abu Soliman. Janjalani and Soliman are in a select group of top Abu Sayyaf commanders for whose capture the United States has offered a bounty of $5 million.

Sighted in mall

The retired general said Soliman was once sighted in Tawi-Tawi by his field assets but that a very recent sighting was in a "mall in Zamboanga City."

Regarded as an intellectual with a solid academic background, as well as Islamic training here and abroad, Soliman has said the Feb. 27 explosion and fire which ravaged the SuperFerry 14 and killed more than 100 people was an Abu Sayyaf job.

He has warned of more bombings ahead in the Metro Manila area.

The retired general claimed that two weeks before the ferry disaster, he already had very "detailed information about the planned attack on a vessel of the WG&A"—the owners of the SuperFerry 14 and now known as Aboitiz Transport Systems Corp.

"We even have the real name of Arnulfo Alvarado or Abu Muhadz, and we knew they were trained in an area in Central Mindanao," the retired military officer added.

The Abu Sayyaf has said the fire on the ferry was caused by a bomb planted by Alvarado, supposedly one of its men.

One of the six Abu Sayyaf suspects arrested by security forces in recent days has reportedly told investigators he planted the bomb, hiding it in a television set he had brought aboard.

A neat story, except that the confessed bomber was identified by the police as Redendo Cain Dellosa.

Spent force

The ex-general, who worked for many years in the military's intelligence agency, said he did not pass on his information to the security agencies because of their "total disbelief in anything that this group (Abu Sayyaf) is capable of doing."

The incredulity was reflected in government statements that "the Abu Sayyaf is already a spent force, neutralized and placed in a corner," he said.

The source was one of the decorated intelligence officers during the administration of then President Corazon Aquino. He retired a year after the Ramos administration took over.

He said in an interview in Quezon City that an informant told him weeks before the SuperFerry 14 fire occurred: "The man who will carry out the suicide bombing has arrived in Manila."

When disaster struck the ferry, the informant told him, "*O, di ba sinabi ko na sa inyo, may kasunod pa yan,* same target, different location *lang* (See what I told you, there will be a repeat, same target, different location only)," the retired general said.

He said that to beat the Abu Sayyaf, all intelligence units must coordinate their actions and "acknowledge the clear and present danger" posed by the terrorists—not as a spent force but as a "revived threat" to national security.

"I hope the intelligence community put their act together for the sake of national security," the source said.

Jemaah Islamiyah

He said the Mindanao camp where the Abu Sayyaf was training its future bombers was being used by other radical groups.

"*Hindi lang MILF, ASG at Jemaah Islamiya (JI) ang nagtetraining don, lahat na ng gustong mag-training na pareho nila ng pag-iisip, nag-training na don,*" according to the retired general.

JI is a Southeast Asia-based terror group linked by Western intelligence agencies to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network and blamed for a number of bombings in the region, including the Bali blasts which killed more than 200 people.

ASG's Soliman said JI militants whom the military said were undergoing training in Mindanao were: "*Sabit lang, walang organisasyon, hindi naka-focus dito, same purpose pero hindi dito ang atensiyon* (They are not the main players here, they have no organization, their focus is not here, they have the same purpose but their attention is elsewhere)."

Soliman suggested that the JI was more inclined to hit targets "in other areas of Southeast Asia."

Irony

"The irony about the Philippine government is that ... they are belittling us but they are exaggerating the problem of terrorism in the country and using, as an example, the likes of the Jemaah Islamiyah, which is based in Indonesia. But what is in front of them, they do not see."

Supt. Rodolfo Mendoza, now Pampanga police director but previously involved with the national police intelligence group, said the Abu Sayyaf had reached what he called a "Second Coming."

"Based on my sources from the South, the group has managed to refocus its attention to the original principles laid down by the late Ustadz Abdurajak Abubakar Janjalani," Mendoza said, referring to the ASG founder who was killed in 1998.

Asked whether the ASG has the capability to carry out bombings in key cities, such as Metro Manila, Mendoza said: "It's a second coming for them. A determined terrorist can make the difference in ... any threat."

4 kidnap suspects slain

From page A1

multiple murder and planting of evidence against Reyes and other officials.

The new respondents on the list were Gen. Narciso Abaya, Armed Forces chief of staff; Supt. Joel Goltiao, spokesperson of the Philippine National Police, and Ang-See, head of the Citizens' Action Against Crime.

Major route

Road 10 is a narrow street whose northbound lane is lined with hundreds of shanties. It is a major route connecting Manila and Navotas.

By Bontigao's account, NAKTF operatives received information that members of the Allan Balimbingan group were to strike in Navotas. They tailed the five men starting in Sitio Puting Bato, and were about to accost them on Road 10 when they were fired upon.

Three of the suspected kidnappers—including the driver, who was identified as Reynaldo Misa through his license—died on the spot from bullet wounds, mostly in the chest and head.

Of the two taken to the Tondo Medical Center, one later died. PO3 Noel Banares told the INQUIRER that the other suspected kidnapper, Christopher Elizalde, 26, of Malabon City, was in critical condition.

Children injured

Police said five .45-cal. pistols and a 9-mm handgun were found on the suspected kidnappers.

Banares identified the driver of the Vanette as Lope Varela, 41, who was wounded in the shoulder. The bullets that hit the vehicle broke its windows, causing injury to the five children on board.

All the occupants of the van, as well as truck driver Felmio Gamboa, were taken to the Tondo Medical Center, Banares added.

Bontigao said truck helper John Yambao, 20, was brought to the Jose Reyes Memorial Hospital, and NAKTF operative Sgt. Odimar Sayas to the AFP Medical Center. Both men had leg wounds.

P30,000 'balato'

According to information from NAKTF headquarters in Camp Aguinaldo, the Allan Balimbingan gang is a subgroup of the Waray-Waray gang and operates mostly in Tondo, Antipolo and Fairview.

Lorna Ramoso said Reyes ordered her husband and other NAKTF operatives Edwin Pastrana and Roland Sarmiento to abduct Congressman Ledesma's two young children about two years ago.

"I was able to convince my husband not to go, but [Pastrana] and [Sarmiento] went ahead. The mission was successful," the widow said.

She also said Reyes gave her husband a P30,000 *balato* (bonus) for the "tried and tested formula" that Ledesma had cited for the safe recovery of his children.

According to Ramoso, Sarmiento went missing after the kidnapping of the Ledesma children.

'All lies'

She said Reyes and other NAKTF officials were also behind the kidnapping of one Joshua Cancio, 12; an unnamed Chinese-Filipino businessman from San Pablo, Laguna; "the Barrera sisters" in 2002, and the killing of airport executive Lilia Diaz and Laguna business magnate Hector Tan.

The INQUIRER tried to reach Reyes through his mobile phone, to no avail. But earlier, he described Ramoso's accusations as "all lies meant to weaken the NAKTF and eventually the government at the height of the campaign period."

On March 25, Ramoso also filed cases against Reyes and several other NAKTF officials for allegedly killing her husband and staging "make-believe" accomplishments in the fight against kidnapping syndicates.

She also accused broadcasters Sen. Noli de Castro and Jiggy Manicad of covering up the killing.

'Media event'

In yesterday's "supplementary complaint," Ramoso included the CAAC's Ang-See for allegedly covering up the supposed criminal operations of Reyes and NAKTF operatives.

Ramoso said Ang-See had admitted knowing her late husband as "Batman" in several radio interviews. But eventually, Ramoso said, Ang-See changed her tune and called Ramoso and her companions "liars."

In a phone interview, Ang-See said Ramoso and company had sought her help on Tuesday. But she said she did not find the group's story credible, especially the allegation that Reyes had given Ramoso's husband a car.

She said the car registration and other documents they showed her did not bear Reyes' name although it was notarized in Camp Crame.

Ang-See said she told the group that she had "to process" the information before acting on it.

"What they wanted me to do was to blow the whole thing up in the media, but I told them that I had to process the information," she said, adding: "They want to make it a media event. The media should not take them seriously."

Ang-See said Ramoso and company had also threatened to include her in the charges against the NAKTF should she refuse to join them in press briefings. She said they made the threat to her through text messages.

Asked to comment on the case filed against her, Ang-See declared: "So be it."

'Atmosphere of violence'

"People want to neutralize me. They want to neutralize the NAKTF because they want to go on with the kidnappings," Ang-See said.

She also said Ramoso's group was composed of the wives of alleged kidnappers.

Ramoso claimed that her husband and his brother Ronald, Edwin Pastrana and Ricky Original were ambushed and killed by NAKTF operatives on Dec. 2, 2003, to silence them.

But the NAKTF earlier said the four men, who were linked to the kidnapping of Jethro Chua, were killed in a legitimate encounter that resulted in the rescue of Chua.

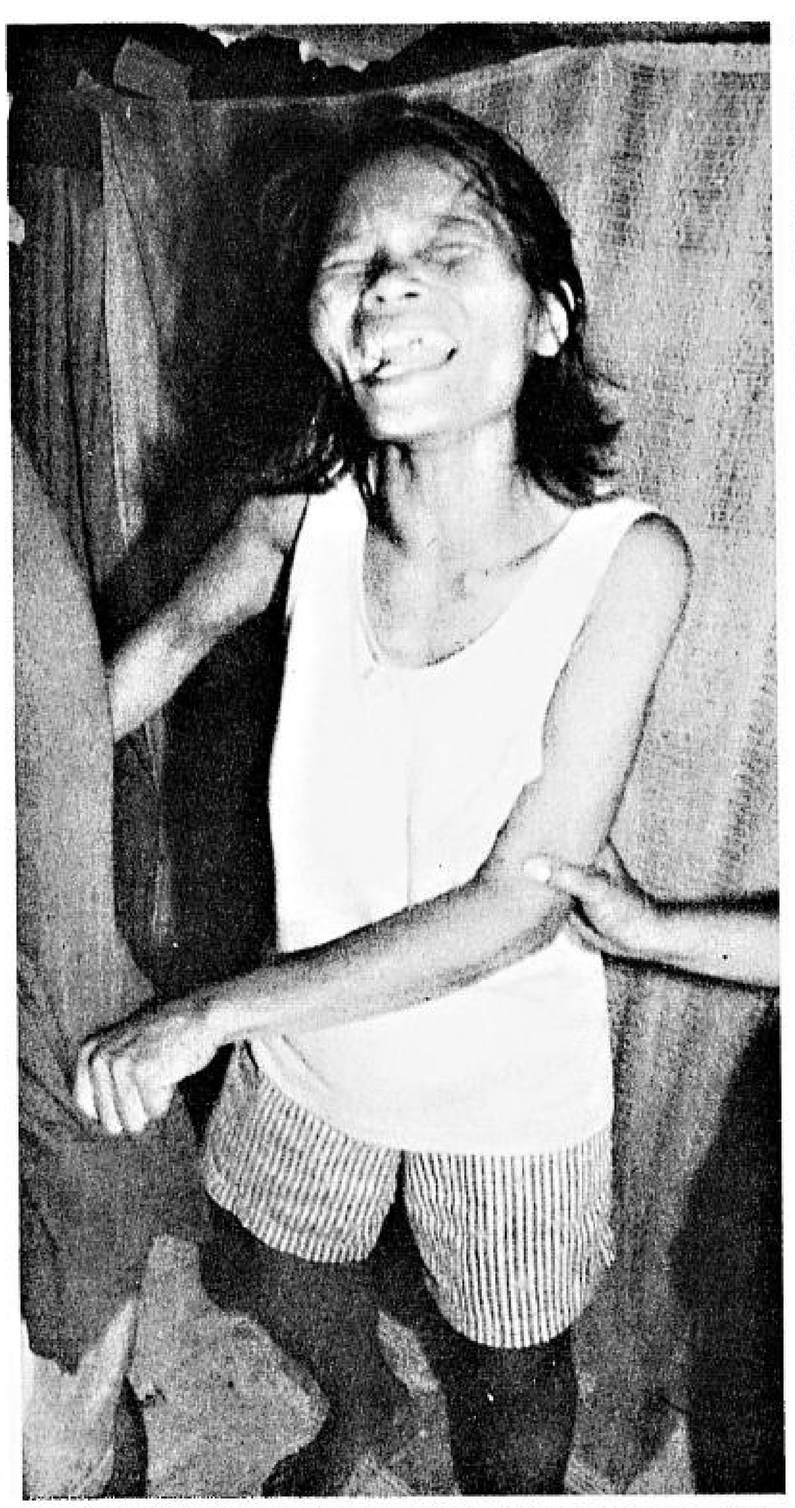
According to Ramoso, the killing of the four and others implicated in kidnapping activities, was intended to "artificially create an atmosphere of violence ... to scare the Chinese-Filipino community."

'Make-believe shoot-outs'

This was supposedly intended to "later secure [the community's] support after a series of cosmetically staged accomplishments where make-believe shootouts and rescues are the main ingredients."

Ramoso said "Reyes and his cohorts in the government, including some personalities in the media, are in fact behind the controversial murders and kidnappings that occurred in the past year."

"My husband was a professional hit man. He was ordered by Reyes to kidnap people who were later rescued by the NAKTF," Ramoso said in an earlier interview. *With a report from Alcuin Papa*



Jonalyn Gallando breaks into tears upon learning that her 4-year-old daughter Jennifer is fighting for her life after being hit by a stray bullet. The child died on the way to the hospital. ERIK ARAZAS

Abu terror suspects framed, say kin

From page A1

"The guns and bombs they said they found on him had all been planted."

Hana, who is eight months pregnant, denied that her husband belonged to any terror group and added that he had been tortured in jail.

Converted to Islam

Marylin Laudit said her brother Dellosa had also been framed. "My brother is not a member of Abu Sayyaf and he has no sympathy for them nor for anyone else who harms other people," she said.

Laudit said her brother converted to Islam in 2001 and was held for a month in 2002 before being released without charges.

Amirah Ali Lidasan of the Suara Bangsamoro, a Muslim activist party-list group that organized the news conference, said the arrests were part of a campaign against Muslims.

"It is very sad to note that she (Ms. Macapagal) hypes up the antiterror campaign in her bid to get attention for her bid in the May 10 polls," Lidasan said.

But Ms Macapagal dismissed the opposition's claims that the crackdown on suspected terrorists and the uncovering of a plot to bomb shopping malls, oil depots and commuter trains in the metropolis were part of her administration's plan to abort the May 10 elections.

"The opposition must never make terrorism a political issue. By doing this, they are playing into the hands of evil," she said in a statement.

Security officials have said they are monitoring the activities of certain foreigners who could be helping recruit members to Islamic militant groups such as Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida or Jemaah Islamiyah, a Southeast Asia-based network blamed for the Bali blasts that killed 202 people in 2002.

4 Turks

The wife of Omercikuglu, 30, director of the Imam Institute, earlier reported to police that her husband and his three colleagues were abducted late Wednesday.

Omercikoglu's Filipino wife Anniemay said the immigration agents had failed to show a warrant of arrest but carried a letter supposedly signed by Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez. She said her husband's hands were tied before he and his three colleagues were taken away in two vans.

An immigration official, who refused to be identified, told the Associated Press that the Turks were taken into custody by agents from the bureau's antiterrorism unit. It later turned out that the four were apparently arrested by mistake and there was no indication of terror links, he said.

The men were being taken to the immigration bureau in Manila, the official added.

OIC

Reached through his mobile phone in Manila, Ampatuan told the INQUIRER that Fernandez had issued an assurance that the Turks would be immediately released. The four have been teaching at the Imam Institute since 2001.

"Commissioner Fernandez told me that they only responded to a request for action filed by a concerned citizen about the presence of suspected terrorists in Cotabato City. I told him that I know the Turks and I can guarantee that they are not connected with terrorism," he said.

Ampatuan said Turkish Ambassador Tanju Sumer had voiced concern over the arrests.

Turkey is a member of the powerful Organization of the Islamic Conference, which the Philippines wants to become member of. Turkey is scheduled to host the next OIC meeting in which the Philippines' bid for an observer status would be tackled.

6 terror suspects

The Philippines wants to take over the Moro National Liberation Front's seat in the OIC but it needs more support for its bid.

Security forces have been on red alert for suspected militants since authorities announced this week that they foiled a major terror attack in Metro Manila with the arrest of six suspected terrorists and the seizure of 36 kg of TNT.

Arrested late last month by Philippine National Police intelligence agents were Villanueva; Dellosa; Al-hamsed Manatad Limbong, alias Kosovo; Abdusaid Lim; Radsamar Sangkula; and a certain Jamil. The six have not been presented to the media.

'Not a bomber'

During the press conference, Hana Villanueva handed out copies of a police prosecution document stating that her husband was a member of Abu Sayyaf and that he was arrested on March 28 in Manila in possession of a pistol, 10 plastic bags (each containing one kg of TNT) and two batteries with a wire connected to a cell phone.

The Abu Sayyaf, which claims to be fighting for a separate Islamic state in Mindanao, gained notoriety in the early 1990s with a series of bomb attacks. The group, which later turned to kidnapping for ransom, has been denounced by other Muslim groups as "un-Islamic."

Hana said her husband was snatched by members of the PNP Intelligence Group around 5 p.m. Sunday at SM Fairview in Quezon City. "He's no bomber. All they're saying against him are not true," she said.

Chief Supt. Joel Goltiao, PNP spokesperson, said Villanueva's arrest was a "legitimate police operation."

Blindfolded

Hana said she next saw her husband on Tuesday noon at the IG headquarters in Camp Crame where she learned about his ordeal.

According to her, Villanueva was blindfolded, handcuffed and brought to a "safe house" where he and several others were tortured into admitting their involvement in a plan to bomb Metro Manila.

"He told me the police were careful not to leave any marks so they also used cellophane on his face," she claimed.

Bodyguard

Hana said her husband was engaged in buying and selling used cars. From 1991 to 2001, he served as a bodyguard for actor Robin Padilla.

She said her husband was with Padilla when the actor went to the Abu Sayyaf's lair in Basilan to intercede in behalf of several hostages in 2001.

"He was there simply because he was a bodyguard, not because he was an Abu Sayyaf," she explained.

Villanueva, she said, was an Ilocano who converted to Islam in 1997. *With reports from AP, AFP and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

DepEd lifts campaign ban on campuses

From page A1

come virtual free-for-all zones for the rest of the election season. Fortunately, students are on their summer break.

Education Secretary Edilberto de Jesus has recalled an order dated March 3 that banned campaigning in public elementary and high schools. Undersecretary Ramon Bacani, acting secretary at the time, issued the order, citing the Commission on Elections' special guidelines.

In his memo, Bacani said the guidelines were meant to "ensure that our schools are protected from overt politicking" and "prevent situations that could compromise our teachers' integrity." Public school teachers serve as election officers.

De Jesus, in a later memo dated March 26, allowed political rallies and public meetings in campuses, as long as a local government permit is first secured. He had few requirements for school officials, among these to "remind" rally organizers to clean up afterwards.

The latest memo likewise said "political rallies and public meetings must not be scheduled during school days." Since classes don't resume until June 7, this provision is well taken care of, if not altogether unnecessary.

De Jesus did not offer any explanation for the turnaround.

GMA 'pastoral letter'

President Macapagal-Arroyo, who is seeking a full term, has been showing up for commencement exercises in select schools. For days when she can't attend, she has a message for graduates that is read during the rites in both public and private high schools.

And for good measure, the DepEd has created special awards in her name.

Courting votes in schools is fine, presidential candidate Raul Roco said yesterday, for as long as graduates were not forced to listen to the President's politicized speeches.

"Obliging (students) to listen to her is, for the college level, a violation of academic freedom and, for the elementary level, in very bad taste," Roco told reporters during his slate's visit to the slums of Talayan and Tatalon in Quezon City.

The standard-bearer of Alyansa ng Pag-Asa said Ms Macapagal's "bad record" in governance was hardly inspiring for the students, anyway.

Broadcaster Jay Sonza, an Alyansa senatorial candidate, said he personally witnessed a case of "forcing through" by the President.

After he spoke at a commencement exercise, Sonza recounted, the President's *pro forma* address was read. "She wasn't invited. Why should that message be inflicted on the schools?" he demanded.

"That's her pastoral letter," former Solicitor General Frank Chavez, another Alyansa senatorial aspirant, said, only half in jest.

Bad logic

Noting Ms Macapagal's tendency in her speeches to harp on actor Fernando Poe Jr.'s lack of experience, Roco suggested: "She should complete the equation. Her listeners (should be told of) bad experience under the present administration, no-experience under Poe, and the good experience of Alyansa bets."

The former education secretary scoffed at the claim of the President's campaign spokesperson Michael Defensor that a vote for Roco was like a vote for Poe.

"Very bad logic," Roco said. "A vote for Gloria is a wasted vote. That's what helps FPJ."

Ms Macapagal seems to have been further emboldened by the latest developments.

Turning up at the Novaliches High School graduation rites yesterday, she pledged "education for all"—essentially, a scholarship for a child in every poor family.

She attended the commencement exercises in four other schools in the same day—Pasay City East High School, Balara High School, Southeast Asian College, and Fort Bonifacio High School. On Wednesday, she was guest of honor in three major schools in Batangas.

If elected in May, Ms Macapagal told her Novaliches audience, her education program would start next school year.

Education for all is also Roco's battle cry. But Ms Macapagal said her own program was in place, and details were now being worked out by DepEd and readied for implementation next school year.

Shortly before the campaign period began, the President launched a program to lend P8,000 per semester to needy graduating students. They would pay back the loan two years after graduating.

Ms Macapagal told the students yesterday that her scholarship scheme complemented her Philhealth insurance aid for poor families. This right after a brush with nine disqualification charges arising from her alleged use of government resouces to promote her candidacy. *(See related story on Page A1.)*

Maynilad exec says new firm can handle debts

From page A1

into Maynilad after writing off P5.2 billion worth of investments in the company and another P1 billion in cash advances.

The deal calls for the reprivatization of Maynilad in three to five years.

Under the proposed agreement, the MWSS would acquire 63 percent of Maynilad, but it would have to shoulder the P8 billion in unpaid concession fees by Maynilad and the utility's bridge loans amounting to $39 million.

Benpres, the holding firm of the Lopez family, reiterated yesterday that the compromise agreement was not a "sweetheart deal" that bailed out the Lopezes

In a statement, Benpres said the agreement completely wiped out the $80 million investment that the Lopez family placed in Maynilad.

Benpres said this totally removed the Lopez family "from having anything to do at all with the New Maynilad that would result from the agreement."

The Lopezes will suffer write-offs of roughly P3.8 billion and shed its 60-percent control of the company.

Rep. Joey Salceda earlier said that this punished the Lopezes for poor business judgment in agreeing to pay 90 percent of the MWSS total debt of $800 million.

An alternative to the agreement is the rehabilitation plan of Maynilad drafted in November last year in which the Lopezes and Ondeo would retain full ownership of Maynilad, MWSS would be barred from drawing on the $120-million performance bond, and Maynilad would be allowed to pay its outstanding concession fee payments that stand at P7.1 billion over a nine-year period.

Substitution

Benpres explained that assuming the MWSS could draw on the entire $120-million performance bond, "this will only result in a substitution of creditors" from the MWSS to the banks that issued the bond.

"That does not help Maynilad carry out its mandate of providing clean water to the residents in its area," Benpres said. It also denied that the agreement would transfer debts that the Lopezes incurred to the government.

"On the contrary, government will receive cash paid out of the performance bond that effectively updates all concession fee payments," it said.

Benpres added it was not correct to say that the consumers and government were being made to bear the losses "due to the bad business judgment of the Lopezes."

"The Lopezes, through Benpres, are bearing their losses to the tune of P3.2 billion in equity investment and another P629 million in advances to Maynilad, all being written off under the agreement," it said.

It said the Maynilad-MWSS agreement was not a "midnight deal" that was "quickly and secretly hammered out."

Benpres explained the agreement was the culmination of a drawn-out negotiation that started in 2000 during the term of former President Joseph Estrada, when Maynilad, under its concession agreement, sought relief from the "disastrous effects of the drastic drop of the peso."

The peso fell in 1997 to 55 against the dollar from 26 to the greenback. "Because of this, the concession fee payments it was making or the 90 percent or $800 million of MWSS' foreign debt that Maynilad assumed upon privatization doubled, from P20 billion to P40 billion, forcing it to stop paying this in March 2001."

Tirona said that the deal between Maynilad and the government—known as Amendment 2—would not result in a new round of increases in water rates.

He said the MWSS had approved in October 2002, Maynilad's application to raise its water rate to P26.75 per cubic meter from P19.92 per cu.m.

Tirona said the next rate rebasing exercise would be in 2007. The increase was supposed to take effect in January 2003 but it was suspended after the MWSS and Maynilad went into arbitration proceedings.

The increase is expected to be implemented in June, but Maynilad officials said this had nothing to do with its deal with the government because the tariff hike was already long overdue.

Conflict of interest

Justice Undersecretary Manuel A.J. Techankee downplayed allegations that the MWSS would have a "conflict of interest" if it took over Maynilad as it would be regulating a company where it owns stock.

If the deal did not push through, the MWSS would still have to take over Maynilad, according to Techankee.

"If there's a takeover, then we would still have the same situation," he said.

Techankee noted that under the deal, the Development Bank of the Philippines would hold in trust the 63-percent share that the MWSS would have in the new Maynilad.

The agreement states that "the terms of the financial trust shall provide, among other things, that MWSS shall at all times preserve its mandate as the regulatory body and shall not participate in decisions relating to the running of the business of the concessionaire."

"MWSS shall not directly manage or make management decisions which shall be the function of the named representative in the Board of Directors of the concessionaire as nominated or designated by the DBP, in consultation with the Department of Finance," it added.

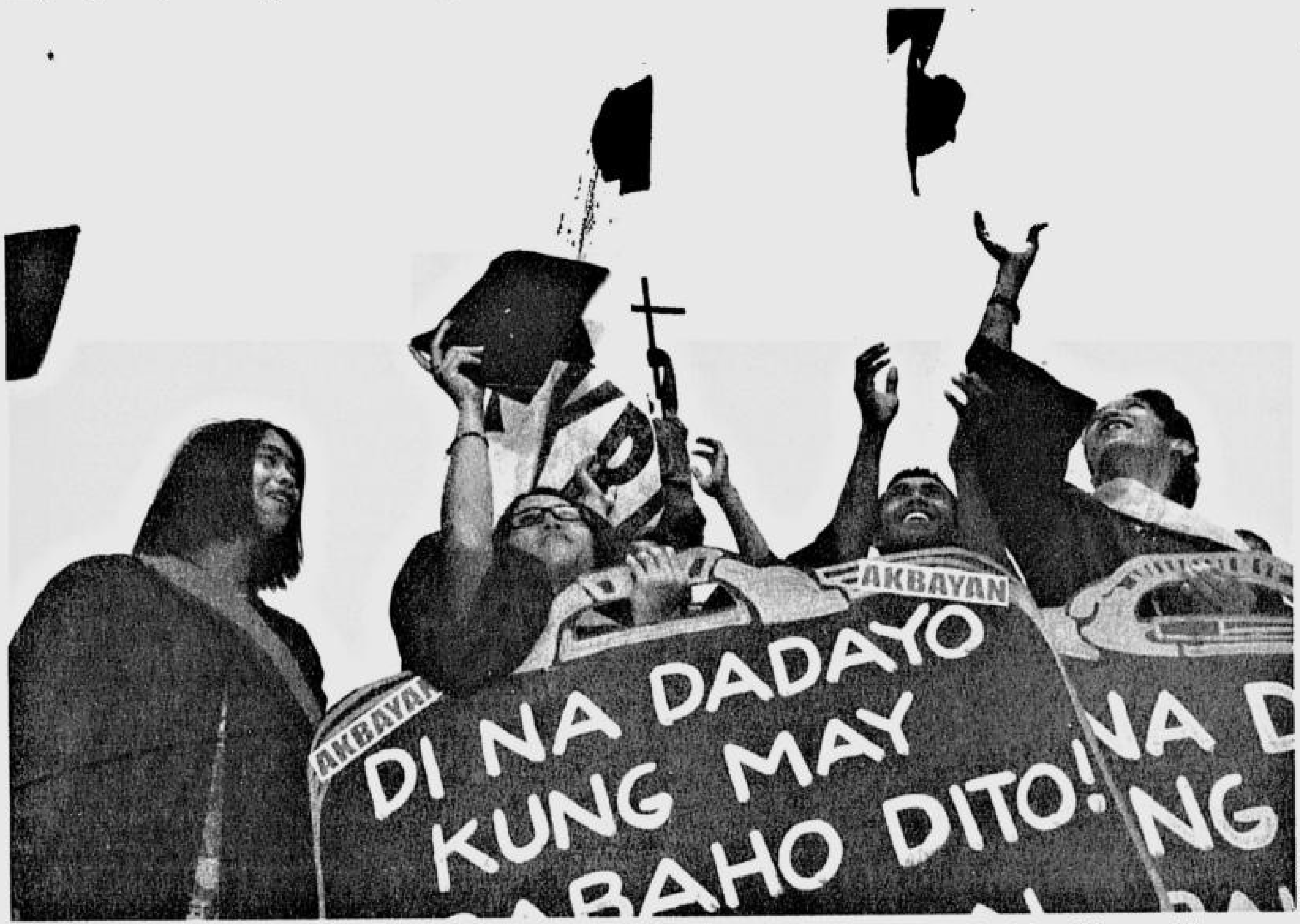
At a Senate briefing, Jaime Laya former central bank governor during Marcos' time and now consultant to the MWSS, said the rehabilitation plan of Maynilad would not save the debt-saddled utility.

The media were allowed to join the briefing, which was also attended by Public Works Secretary Florante Soriquez, Maynilad president Fiorello Estuar, former Maynilad president Rafael Alunan, MWSS Administrator Orlando Hondrade, Senior Deputy Administrator Macra Cruz and Maynilad director Manuel Lopez

Laya said the rehabilitation plan would not solve Maynilad's insolvency because it would still depend on the volatility of the peso.

This prompted Sen. John Osmeña, committee chair, to brand the rehabilitation plan as useless because it was a "band aid solution."

He said the plan failed to address the "underlying problem," which was the unequal allocation of the debt burden of the MWSS that began during the term of President Fidel Ramos.



ERIK ARAZAS

MEMBERS of the party-list group Akbayan stage a rally on Mendiola in graduation togas as they urge presidential candidates to deliver more jobs to graduating students.

2 more disqualification cases filed against GMA

From page A1

City who also claimed to be a member of the group Pro-Con(stitution), which has filed two other disqualification cases against Ms Macapagal in the poll body.

Planas is running for the same Congress seat as Mat Defensor, father of Ms Macapagal's campaign spokesperson Mike Defensor.

The other petition was filed on Wednesday by Alyansa ng Pag-asa senatorial candidates Nicanor Gatmaytan Jr. and Olivia "Bong" Coo, who said Ms Macapagal violated election laws and the Constitution when she ordered that her message calling on graduating students and their parents to support a "strong and tried leadership" be read by education officials in graduation rites.

But Malacañang expects the disqualification cases against Ms Macapagal to be dismissed, after the Supreme Court struck down on Tuesday one case filed by Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino senatorial candidates Boots Anson-Roa and Amina Rasul-Bernardo.

"We welcome the Supreme Court ruling as a vindication of good governance," said Ignacio Bunye, spokesperson for Ms Macapagal. "We are confident that the decision would pave the way for the junking of other charges leveled against [her]."

Bunye also said the tribunal's favorable ruling should serve as a wake-up call to the opposition "to shift [its] campaign to a higher plane instead of engaging in the politics of obstruction and harassment."

Roa and Rasul filed the petition to prevent Ms Macapagal from using government resources in her campaign.

But the high court ruled that the matter of whether the President was using public funds for election purposes should be tackled by the Comelec.

Defensor said the other disqualification cases would be dismissed because they raised the same issues as in the dismissed petition.

He denied that the petition was junked because of the Macapagal-appointed justices.

"It would be highly irresponsible for anyone to say that the Supreme Court is biased [for the President] and put political color in the decision," he said. "I think beyond the legality, the people can see through the cases filed against her."

Ad time

In his petition, lawyer Planas said Pro-Con's monitoring showed that Ms Macapagal had logged 314.25 minutes in 466 spots during the period Jan. 21-Feb. 9 in various TV stations.

He said these were ad placements promoting her candidacy with the "Tubig Naging Bigas (Patubig ni Pangulong Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo)," sponsored by the Philippine Gaming Corp., Manila Water, Maynilad Water Services, and the Manila Waterworks and Sewerage System.

Computed at P250,000 per minute of exposure, the total cost for the 20-day period before the start of the campaign period on Feb. 10 was already P78.5 million, Planas said.

According to Planas, Ms Macapagal has admitted having caused the airing of political ads on TV starting Jan. 5, the same day that she filed her certificate of candidacy and well before the start of the campaign period.

He said Ms Macapagal's full name, sometimes her initials, and sometimes her first name only—complemented by her image, photograph or on-camera visuals—were all over the TV in the ads of various government agencies extolling her achievements in such areas as housing, anti-drug efforts, water, peace and order, employees' welfare, agriculture and education.

"The continued airing and showing of the television advertisements and the continued failure of [Ms Macapagal] to remove, discard, stop or do away with these [ads] which carry her name, picture and image and which trumpet her so-called achievements, make her liable for 'premature campaigning," Planas said.

Permanent injunction

On the other hand, the Alyansa ng Pag-asa's Coo and Gatmaytan asked the Comelec to stop Ms Macapagal and some education officials from reading her message urging graduates and their parents to support a "strong and tried" leadership.

They sought a temporary restraining order, and also asked the Comelec to make the injunction permanent and to declare Ms Macapagal disqualified from running.

They noted that Commission on Higher Education Chair Manuel Punzal issued a memorandum on March 16 directing all heads of colleges and universities to read Ms Macapagal's message at all graduation ceremonies.

The message states that in the three years of her presidency, Ms Macapagal was able to make a strong start, turning the economy around and stabilizing the "mess" she had inherited.

It says she has been fighting for change for the average Filipino and that "we" must continue the fight for change to make the country more secure.

"This is the challenge that awaits all of us, especially the parents of our young graduates," the message says. "We must help each other build our future. Let us not imperil that future. The nation is best served by strong and tried leadership that is committed to realize our people's authentic aspirations."

Gatmaytan and Coo said it was "clear" that Ms Macapagal and Punzal committed electioneering in violation of the Omnibus Election Code and the Constitution.

They said the message and the memorandum violated academic freedom. *With a report from Juliet Labog-Javellana*

Energy chief warns of power rate hikes after polls

From page A1

tory Commission (ERC).

Low rates are also being charged in the Visayas at P2.10 per kWh and in Mindanao at P1.04 per kWh. Based on Napocor's application for new rates, customers in the Visayas should be paying Napocor P2.35 per kWh, while those in Mindanao should be shelling out P1.45 per kWh.

When the 40-centavo cap was imposed, Napocor's PPCA fell by 85 centavos per kWh. During the first year of the cap's implementation, the state firm had to borrow $500 million to pay for costs that could not be passed on to end-consumers.

While Perez stressed that the imposition of caps on the PPCA was not hinged on politics, he hinted that a more concrete directive on the 40-centavo cap could only come upon the conclusion of the national elections.

The ERC earlier said it was up to Malacañang to lift the cap because it was the President who imposed it.

The lifting of the cap would result in higher electricity costs for consumers because Napocor's customers would just pass on the higher PPCA to customers. Lopez-led distribution utility Manila Electric Co. is one of Napocor's biggest customers. Meralco gets about 50 percent of its supply requirements from Napocor.

Asked whether there was a possibility that the cap would be lifted to reflect the true cost of electricity, Perez said: "Ask me that question again in 50 days."

He later corrected himself, after counting the days up to the May polls. He then said that the question would be best answered "after 40 days" or right about after the national elections.

SUERTRES 2 4 1

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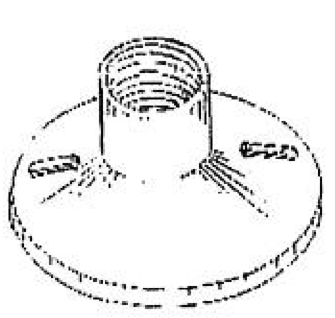

FIG. 1

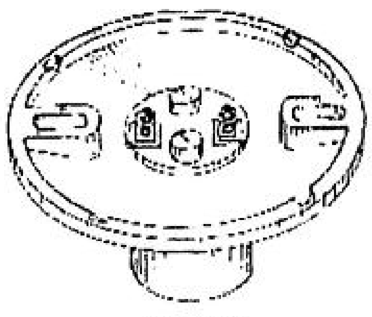

FIG. 2

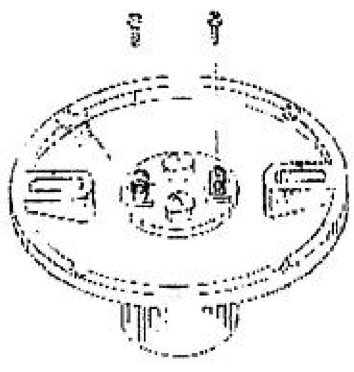

FIG. 3

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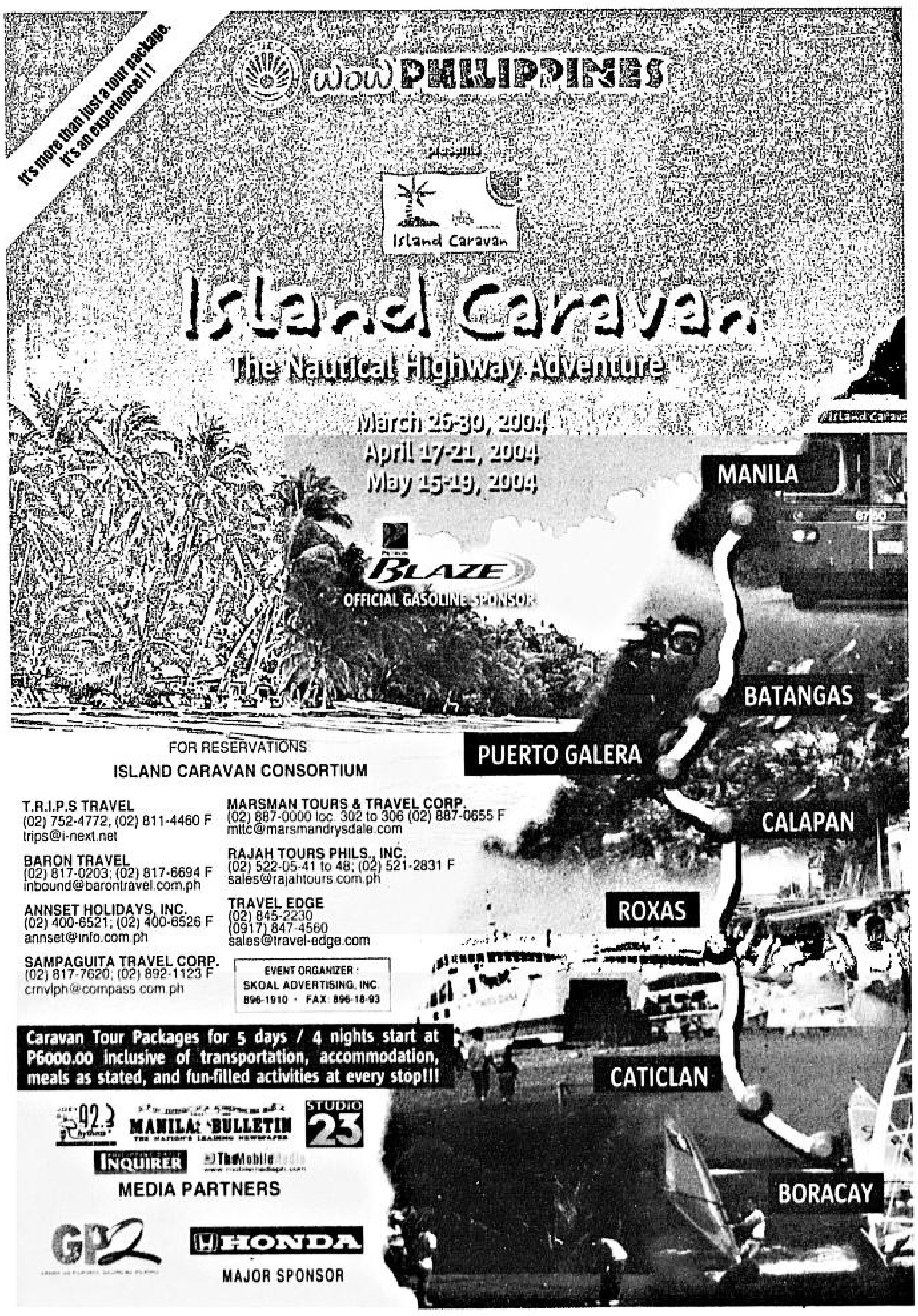

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TABLOIDS described as pornographic have started to flood Metro Manila. ROGER MARGALLO

Printing house raided for porn

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE POLICE raided Wednesday the office of a printing house which allegedly produces pornographic tabloids.

The Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) stormed the office of Men Press publishing house on 20th Street, Port Area, Manila, on the strength of the warrant issued by Manila judge Reynaldo Ros.

More than 6,000 copies of Boso and Katas, two tabloids which purportedly exhibit pornography, were seized. The police also confiscated printing machines and computers.

Also, 15 employees of the publishing house were arrested.

Pornographic tabloids that graphically show naked women and couples performing the sex act, have been flooding the streets and sidewalks of the metropolis, but the Philippine National Police failed to act against them.

The CIDG raided the Port Area publishing house after presidential son Jose Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo urged the PNP and the National Bureau of Investigation to "put a stop to these pornographic materials from invading public markets and sidewalks."

The INQUIRER got hold of copies of tabloids with the names Boso, Sagad, Katas and Todo, which show women with exposed breasts and pubic areas.

The tabloids, which were being openly sold by a sidewalk vendor in Guadalupe, Makati, also show hardcore photos of men and women having sex.

According to Todo, it was being published in Quezon City. Boso, on the other hand was being printed in Laguna.

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Ngayong Alas-10 Ng Gabi

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(May replay bukas, alas-8 ng umaga.)

ABC

Senator urges price watch

A SENATOR yesterday called on trade officials to monitor the prices of basic commodities following the 20 percent increase in jeepney fares.

Sen. Manuel Villar Jr. warned that unscrupulous businessmen might take advantage of the fare hike and increase prices of prime goods.

He said the Department of Trade and Industry should dispatch more monitoring teams and strictly watch the price movements of basic goods.

"Some businessmen may start hoarding goods because of clamor for increase in wages due to the jeepney fare hike. The government must be able to protect ordinary consumers from price manipulations," he said.

The government implemented yesterday a P0.75 increase in jeepney fares for the first five kilometers in Metro Manila and P0.50 increase in the provinces. The fare for the first four kilometer remains at P4.

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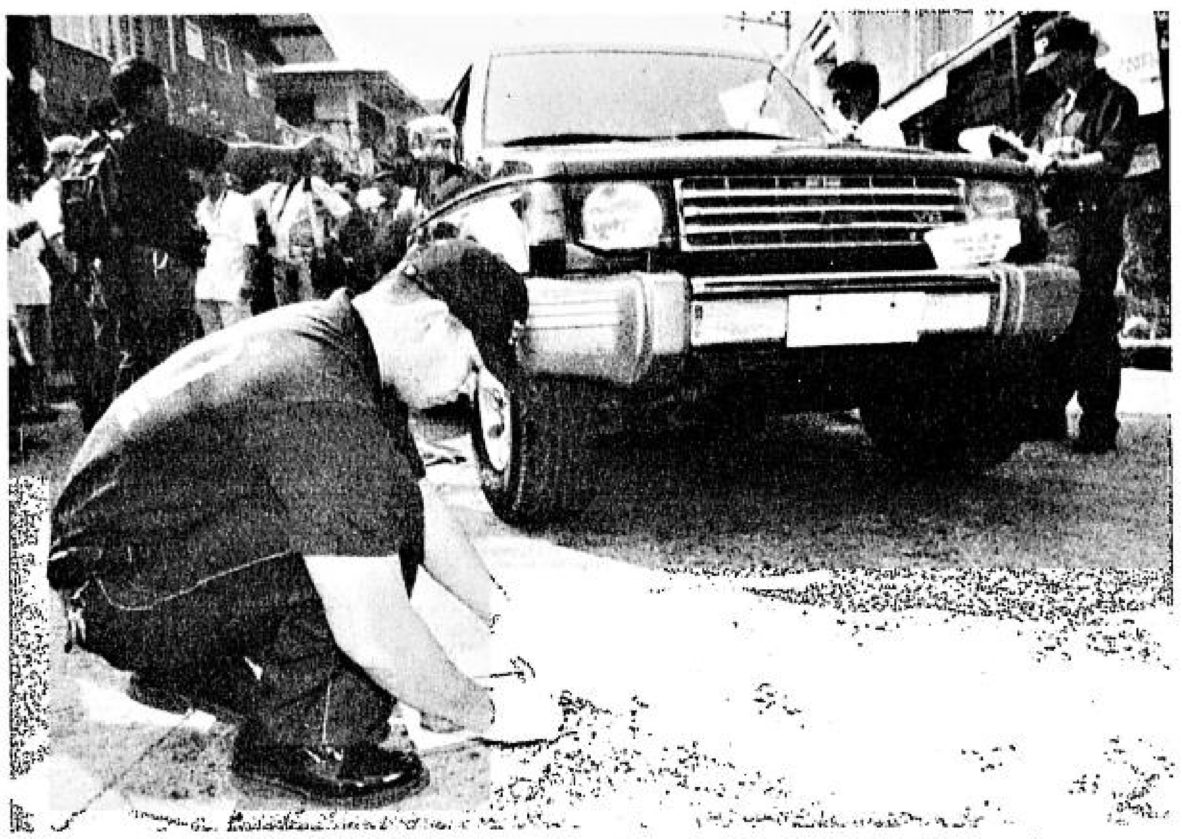
Cops look in coed's diary for evidence

THE WESTERN Police District is checking out other motives aside from robbery for the killing of 19-year-old nursing student Diana Rose Dawang and hopes to gain insight from the diary that she had kept.

A source said they would borrow Dawang's diary from her family to gain information regarding personal matters that could have led to Dawang's killing.

The WPD insider said the victim was stabbed six times, which appeared to indicate that her killer was someone who was angry with her.

The diary could identify if she had enemies. *Lella Salaverria*



A POLICE investigator (above) picks up spent shells at the scene where a Bureau of Customs lawyer was shot dead in Pandacan. At right, another officer looks for evidence inside the victim's Pajero. ERIK ARAZAS

Lawyer, engineer slain in Manila

A PROBER holds up the photo of lawyer Clemente Heraldo, who was one of men gunned down in Pandacan. ERIK ARAZAS

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE HEAD of the Internal Inquiry and Prosecution Division of the Bureau of Customs was gunned down by five men in an ambush in Pandacan, Manila, early yesterday morning.

Prior to the killing of Atty. Clemente Heraldo, the gunmen shot dead Pilipinas Shell engineer Mauricio Gallo, whom they mistook for the lawyer.

Blue Revo

According to the police, Gallo was with his wife, Luisa, and their 8-year-old son on their way to Shell's Pandacan depot when the shooting occurred at 7:30 a.m. along Laura Street.

Gallo, a mechanical engineer, was driving a blue Toyota Revo (XAP 263) when two of the five men suddenly opened fire.

Gallo was hit on the chest, while Luisa was hit on the left side of her body. Their son was unscathed.

After the shooting, one of the gunmen reportedly exclaimed, "*Mali!*" (We made a mistake!)

The gunman then pointed to a blue green Pajero (WDK 888), which was a few cars behind Gallo's Revo and was being driven by the Bureau of Customs lawyer.

Lawyer in Pajero

The five gunmen then turned to Heraldo's Pajero, which was at corner of Adonis and Linceo Streets.

Witnesses said the Pajero was already backing away when the gunmen caught up with it and peppered Heraldo with bullets.

A bullet hit the lawyer in the left eye.

Investigators said the gunmen could have mistaken the Gallos' Toyota Revo for Heraldo's Pajero, since both were sports utility vehicles and their colors were in the same range.

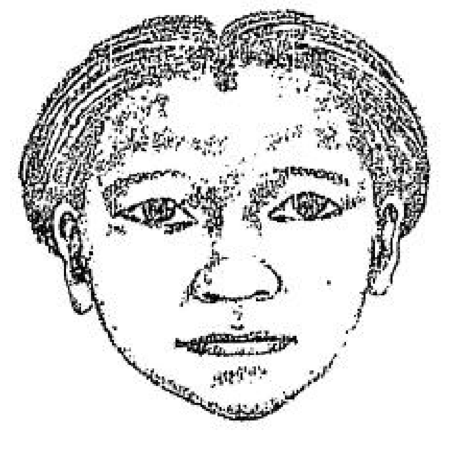
After the incident, the five gunmen boarded a tricycle and asked to be brought to Carreon Street. They paid the driver P25 before walking toward Kahilum in Pandacan.

Heraldo and the Gallo couple were rushed to the Manila Doctor's Hospital after the incident, where the lawyer and the engineer were later proclaimed dead, said SPO1 Benito Cabatbat.

No motive yet

BOC deputy commissioner Alexander Arevalo told reporters that he was at Heraldo's bedside when the latter was proclaimed dead.

"We are not eliminating any angle but we still don't have any indication about the cause of the ambush," he said, but added that the BOC was already coordinating with authorities to get to the bottom of the incident.



AMBUSH suspect

Police have released the artist's sketch of one of the gunmen. The suspect was described as being around 30 to 32 years old, 5'2 to 5'3 tall, with a slim build and a light complexion.

Summer heat kills female detainee in Mandaluyong

By Luige del Puerto

THE HEAT of summer took its toll on a female inmate at the Mandaluyong City Jail yesterday morning.

The police said Anacita Baldomer, 47, failed to make it alive to the Mandaluyong City Medical Center after suffering from a severe asthma attack about 4 a.m.

Warden Supt. Abraham Abella said that on Monday, a medical team visited the jail and gave Baldomer some medicine.

Before dawn yesterday, a jail nurse thrice attended to Baldomer from 1 a.m. until 4 a.m. but the asthma had become so acute that it prompted jail officers to rush the woman to the hospital.

She died on the way, Abella said.

Baldomer was committed to jail last June 9. She was facing charges of violating RA 6425 and RA 9165, the old and the new anti-illegal drugs laws, respectively.

During her stay in jail, she visited the clinic regularly, often staying inside just to see through the day.

In September last year, Baldomer was confined at the city hospital, also after suffering from a severe asthma attack.

Abella admitted that the jail is poorly ventilated. "Baldomer stayed with 14 women inside the former supply room, which we converted into a dormitory. It has a huge window," he said.

"All the sickly women were transferred there because the ventilation was better in that room, compared with the other room" the warden added.

The city jail has 676 inmates, 86 of them women.

Abella said he often asked inmates, in jest, to pray that he wins the lotto so he could have the whole floor air-conditioned.

"As the days get hotter, more and more inmates are having respiratory problems," he said. "This is our perennial problem."

In the middle of last year, city officials held a ground-breaking ceremony for a building extension at the back of the jail.

Once finished, it is expected to accommodate 1,000 inmates.

However, construction for the new jail facility was allegedly suspended because of the elections.

"*Kaso inabot na ng eleksyon,*" Abella said.

"After the elections, I think the project would push through."

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METROBRIEFS

I dies in Malabon fire

FIRE swept a residential area in Malabon City yesterday, destroying 13 houses and killing a 50-year-old man. Fire investigators identified the fatality as Noel Baldos. The fire allegedly started at his house in Katipunan Street in Barangay Bayan-Bayanan at 12:20 p.m. Baldos panicked when the fire broke out and ran to the bathroom, where he was trapped. Investigators estimated the damages at P1.5 million. *Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*

Hit-and-run victim

A JANITOR was killed the other night when a speeding van ran over him in Caloocan City. The van's driver sped off. Police identified the victim as Jose Jerry Espiritu, 34, janitor of Our Lady of Fatima Hospital. He was crossing Edsa, in front of the Balintawak Fire Sub-Station, about 9:30 p.m. on Wednesday, when he was hit by the speeding van. He was rushed by firefighters from the substation to the Manila Central University hospital, where he was declared dead on arrival. Witnesses failed to get the van's plate number. Those who can provide details can call the Traffic Enforcement Group at 366-6033. *Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*

Artists for Bro. Eddie

A GROUP of visual artists have banded themselves together to support presidential candidate Eddie Villanueva of Bangon Pilipinas. The members of the group, who call themselves Visual Artists for Brother Eddie (Vabe), said only a god-fearing president could be entrusted to carry out governance that can redeem the country. The artists include, among others, Malang, Romulo Olazo, Adi Baensantos, Soler Santos, Mona Lisa Santos, Julie Lluch, Fred and Norma Liongoren, Jane dela Paz, Jes Evangelista, Jimmy Kwong and Remy Boquiren. Other artists who wish to join Vabe may call Tina Angeles at 912-4319 or 912-4640, or the West Gallery at 411-0336, 411-9221 or 634-1284.

Alabat High reunion

ALL THE 1979 graduates of Alabat Island National High School will have their silver class reunion on April 10. For more information, please call Anthea Matriano-Dela Cruz at 642-0405 or 931-8698; Raul Ingente at 924-8739 or 926-9305, or Noemi Andrade-Santiago at 817-8211 or 816-1384

LRT safety ensured

MANILA Mayor Joselito Atienza Jr. gave the assurance yesterday that Manila would be safe, in the face of terrorist threats that surfaced following the arrest of suspected members of the Abu Sayyaf.

"We have always been maintaining the highest level of security in those areas," said Atienza.

Atienza was referring to the Pandacan oil depot and the Light Rail Transit line that cuts through Manila's Taft and Rizal avenues.

These places are among the alleged targets of the Abu Sayyaf, who are reportedly planning terror attacks in Metro Manila. They are on a list found in the possession of an alleged member of the bandit group.

"We are not letting our guard down. The threat started a long time ago," explained Atienza.

On Dec. 30, 2000, LRT coaches were bombed at the Blumentritt Station. *Tarra Quismundo*

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Manotoc quits golf elections

Cites NGAP polls flaws

By Jong Arcano

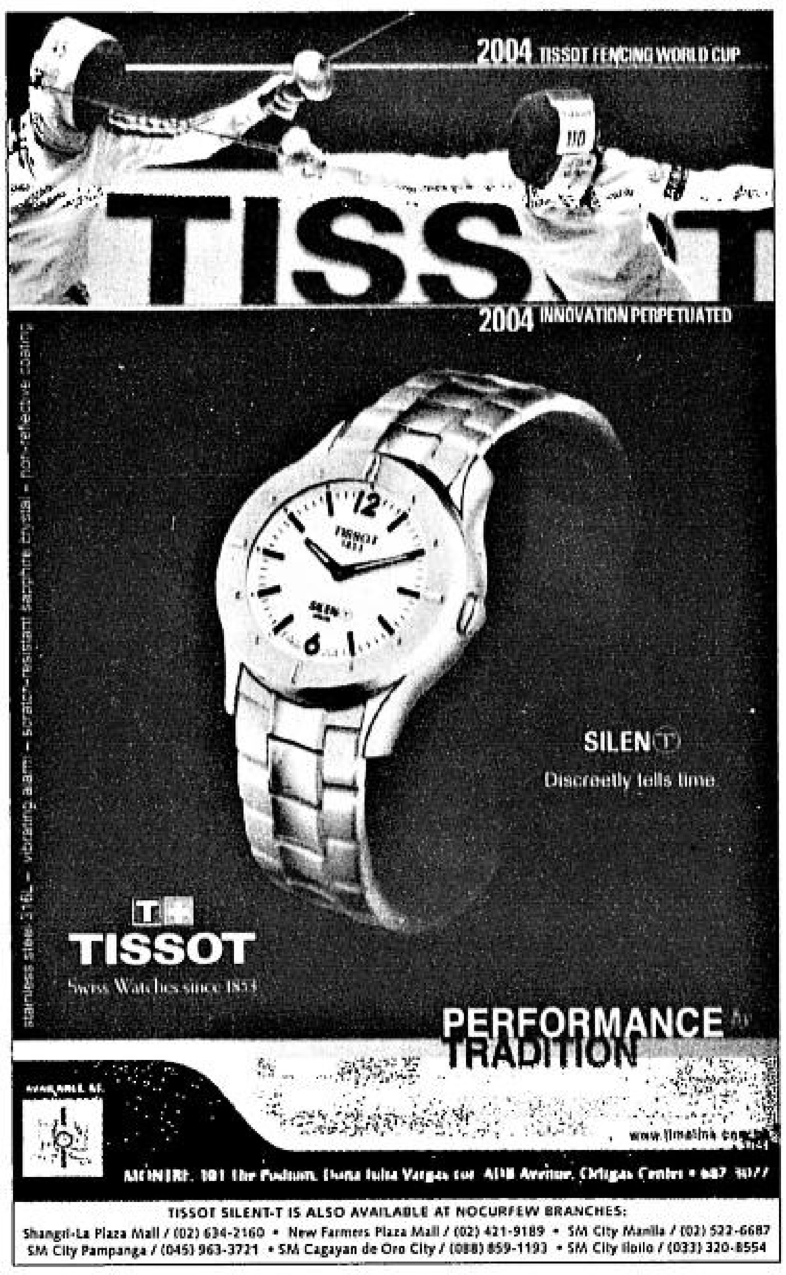
MANOTOC

UNHAPPY with recent developments in the electoral process of the National Golf Association of the Philippines, Tommy Manotoc and Luigi Yulo yesterday withdrew their nominations as candidates in the coming polls of the country's golf governing body.

The withdrawal of Manotoc and Yulo as nominees of Calatagan and Canlubang clubs, respectively, came after Sta. Lucia club Royale Tagaytay had pulled out Vicente Santos, who also sits in the NGAP board as director, from the roster of candidates.

With Andy Dumlao confirming to the INQUIRER that he is also giving up his nomination as Eagle Ridge bet, the number of candidates vying for the 11 NGAP posts has been reduced to 15 from the

MANOTOC/ A27



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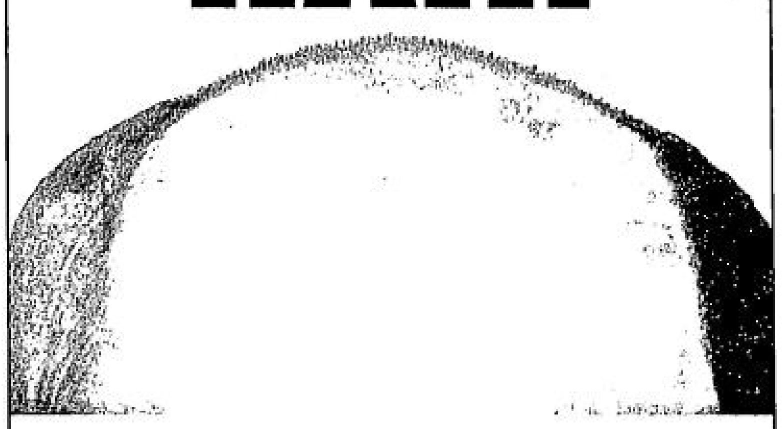

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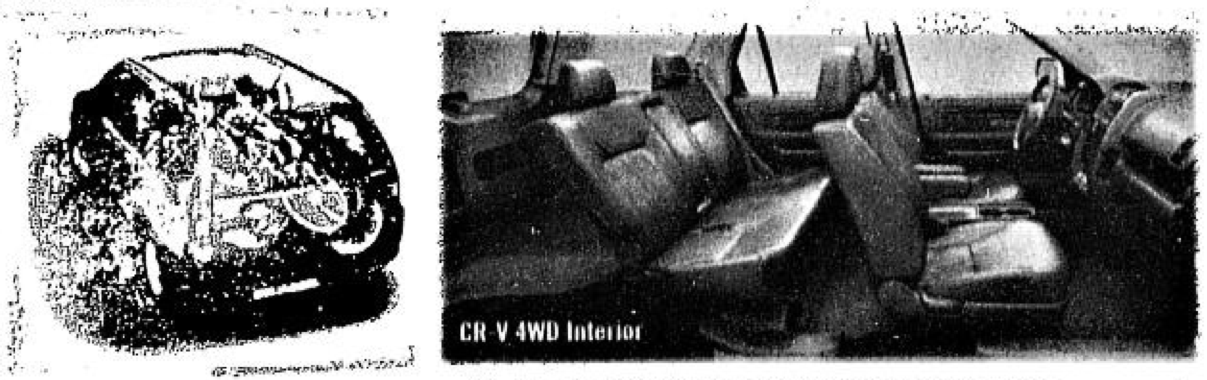

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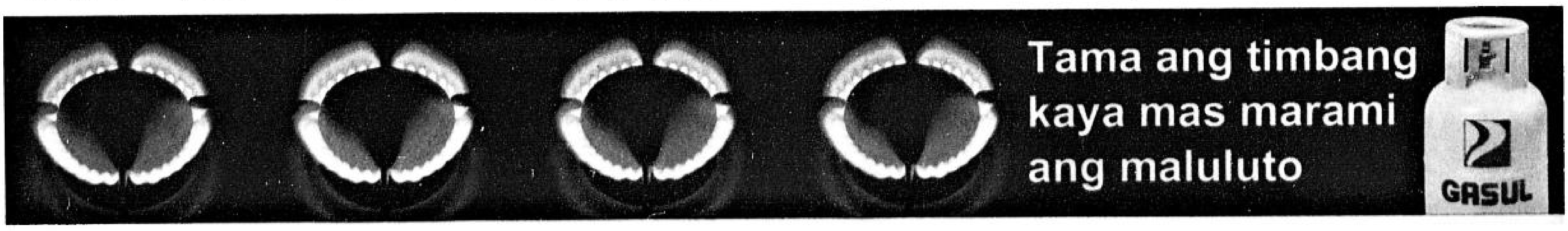

Tama ang timbang kaya mas marami ang maluluto
GASUL

Coach Garcia quits FedEx; Alas likely replacement

BONNIE Garcia became the third Philippine Basketball Association coach to give up his job in the ongoing Fiesta Conferece yesterday.

True to his promise, Garcia stepped down as coach of the Express in what he calls a "supreme sacrifice" for the sake of boosting the cause in the pro league of organization, which he claims has been his second family.

Garcia's resignation came after the Bert Lina-owned Expressfashioned out a hard-earned 97-86 victory over the Sta. Lucia Realtors Wednesday night.

The Express, 2-5 under Garcia with the win, next face the Alaska Aces (5-2) this Sunday at the Araneta Coliseum.

"I told the boys to just give me a victory before I go, so I can have a graceful exit. And here I am, fulfilling a promise to step down and give management a free hand in charting the future of this team," said Garcia.

FedEx team manager Lito Alvarez, who is also the president of the franchise owner Air21, said the sudden turn of events caught the Express by surprise and so "naming a coach at this point in time is impossible."

"Probably, tomorrow, when we hold our practice, we may be able to narrow down our choices and select our coach. For the meantime, Garcia's coaching staff, led by Jojo Villa, will handle the team on an interim basis," said Alvarez.

Allan Caidic was the season's first coaching casualty after he was "elevated" as manager of Barangay Ginebra with Siot Tanquincen taking his old post. Then American John Moran was sacked by Shell, which picked Leo Austria to succeed him.

Sources said former PBA coach Louie Alas, who is currently handling Letran, is a chief contender for Garcia's post after consultant Joe Lipa had begged off to concentrate on his job as mentor of the national team in the coming Southeast Asian Basketball Association (SEABA) tournament.

Garcia took over from Derek Pumaren last year.

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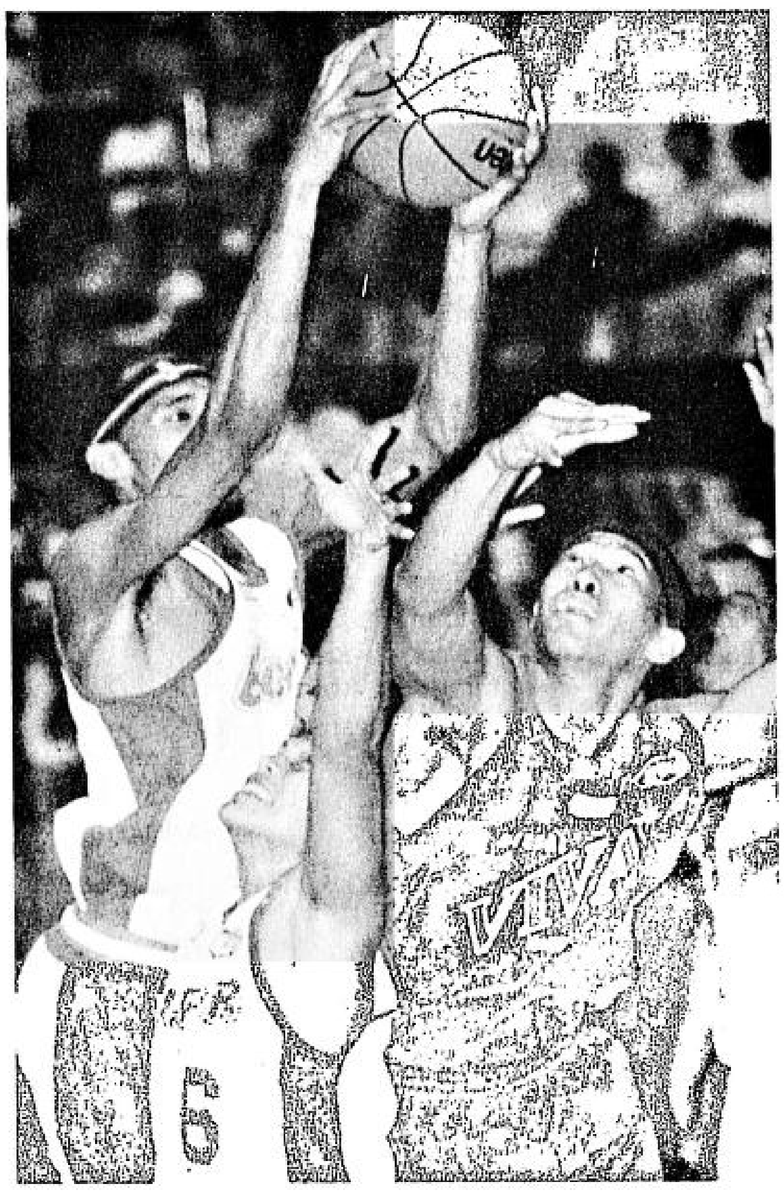
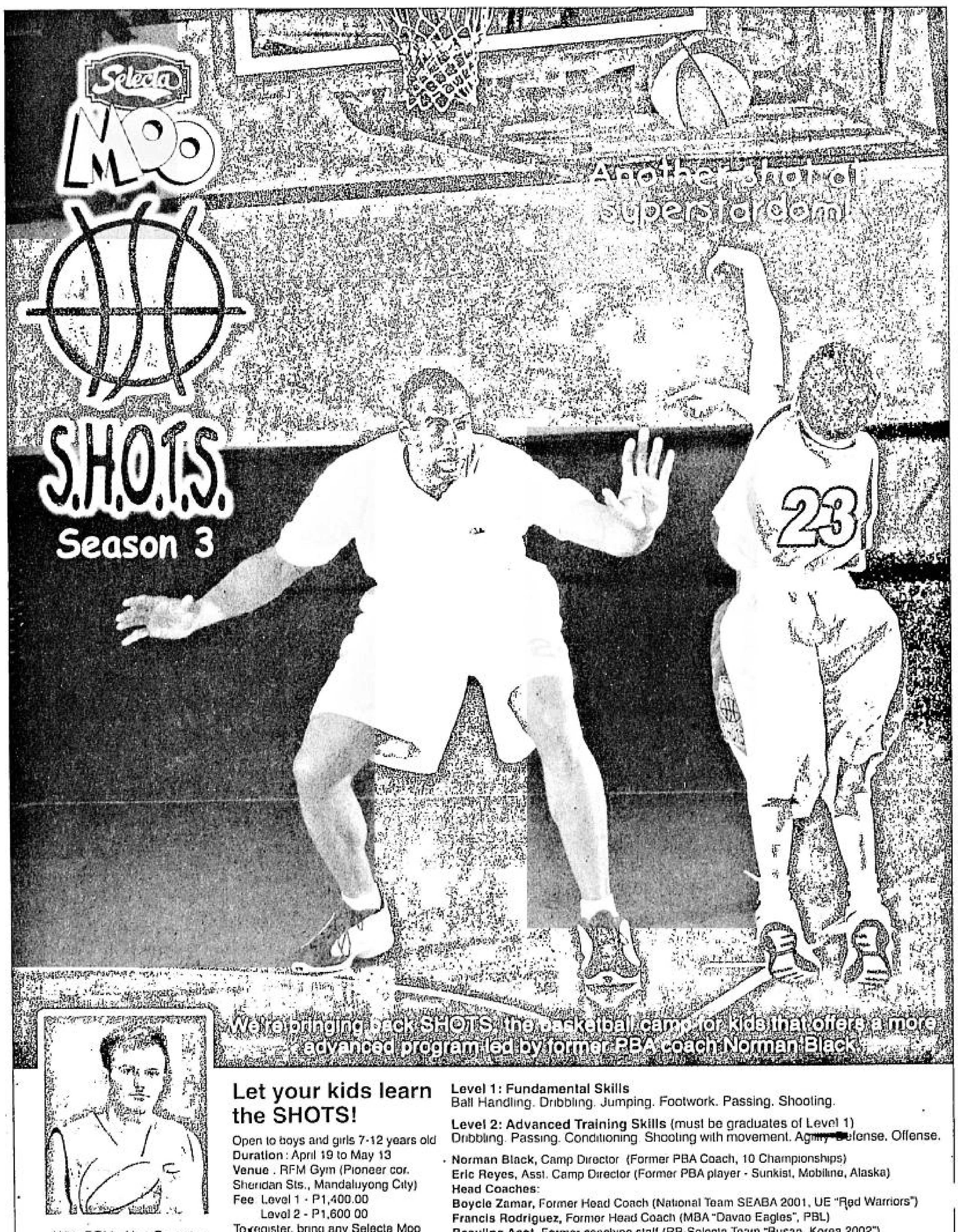


NIÑO Cañaleta (left) of Blustar towers over teammate Ramil Tagupa and Dennis Miranda of Viva Mineral Water during the 2004 PBL Unity Cup at the Makati Coliseum yesterday.

ERNIE U. SARMIENTO



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Viva-FEU, Welcoat crush foes

By Marc Anthony Reyes

ARWIND Santos finished what Mark Isip started. Blending their talents throughout, the two powered Viva Mineral Water-FEU past Blu Star Detergent, 83-76, yesterday for its second straight win in the PBL 2nd Unity Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

Isip scored 11 of his game-high 23 points in the first quarter as Viva took control while Santos made nine of his 19 points in the fourth quarter, including a three-pointer and an undergoal in the last two minutes, to doom the enemy to a second straight loss.

Welcoat Paints joined Viva-FEU on top after downing Toyota Otis-Letran, 76-69, in the second game.

"Our first game belonged to Cesar Catli, but the second game was Arwind's and Mark's game," said Viva coach Koy Banal. "But of course, it was a team effort. The two just provided the spark for us."

"The team is showing its maturity and I'm sure we can do more in the coming games," added Banal, whose charges dropped their first four games in this conference last year before making the finals.

Isip and Santos, both standing 6 feet 4, combined for 42 points. Six-foot guard Eric Dela Cuesta scored 25 points for Blu Star, which took a 76-60 rout from Welcoat earlier.

Warren Ybañez, Dennis Miranda and Neil Raneses also finished in double digits for Viva.

The scores:

First Game

VIVA 83—Isip 23, Santos 19, Ybanez 12, Miranda 10, Raneses 10, Misolas 3, Co 2, Catli 2 Rizada 2, Yabut 0, Garcia 0, Barcellano 0, Sison 0.

BLUSTAR 76—Dela Cuesta 25, Alfad 10 Mesina 9, Victoria 7, Villamin 7, Pascual 7, Gamboa 6, Ferrer 3, Tagupa 2, Canaleta 0, Menor 0.

Quarters: 22-15, 39-32, 62-52, 83-76.

Second Game

WELCOAT 76—Tangkay 19, Tolomia 18 Aldeguer 14, Capus 9, Reyes 7, Gatumbato 4, Ortiguerra 2, Guevarra 2, Uy 1, Celo 0

TOYOTA 69—Enrile 14, Aban 11, Bautista 11 Dula 8, Gaa 8, Pinera 4, Rodriguez 2, Aldave 2 Santos 0, Valdez 0, Anabo 0.

Quarters: 28-15, 49-48, 60-44, 76-69.

Uy eyes repeat in Shell karting super series

ALLAN Uy of Birel-A3 Motorsports guns for a second straight win when the Shell Karting Super Series 2004 stages its second leg this weekend at the Carmona Circuit Philippines.

Uy drew first blood in the kickoff leg last month following a stunning twist in the final race of the event sanctioned by the governing Automobile Association of the Philippines and sponsored by Pilipinas Shell, Bridgestone, Eastway Motorcycle Racing and Denso Iridium Power.

He expects a tough fight from Matteo Guidicelli of Team CRG-Cebu and defending champion Michelle Bumgarner for the Open class title.

Guidicelli was leading Uy in the first leg until a flat tire spoiled his bid. Bumgarner, on the other hand, was bogged down by gremlins in her new engine.

"I'm sure they'll try to come back in this leg. But I'm prepared," said Uy, who gave Pepon Marave a tough fight for the Karter of the Year award two years ago.

Joining the three are Mark Bumgarner and Marty Aguilar of M&M Racing, Christian Barrero and Birel-A3 Motorsorts' Indy Villalon.

Also favored in the weekend races are Tuason Racing-Addict Mobile's Mike Tuason and Dave Tinio.

Tuason also eyes his second win in the Formula 125 Rotax Max Expert class against Tim Gosnel, Manny Sy of Primus Racedevils, Tyson Sy of Demvels and Oliver Yao.

Phone Pals slip past TJ Hotdogs

Duremdes plans US treatment

By June Navarro

TALK 'N Text endured some scary moments before hacking out a thrilling 97-93 win over Purefoods last night in the Gran Matador PBA Fiesta Conference at the Tacloban City Astrodome.

DUREMDES

Jimmy Alapag and Willie Miller bailed the Phone Pals out by cooly sinking their free throws in the final minute, sealing TNT's fifth win in eight games.

With Purefoods just a point behind at 93-94, Alapag sank both his charities off a Noy Castillo foul while Miller split his trip to the charity stripe.

The TJ Hotdogs, who leaned on Castillo's endgame heroics from an 11-point deficit in the final quarter, dropped their fifth game in eight outings and fell into a tie with Shell and Barangay Ginebra.

The Phone Pals led by as many as 16 points twice behind Honeycutt.

Meanwhile, Sta. Lucia Realty's Kenneth Duremdes will seek medical treatment in the United States should the agonizing pain in his right leg continue to hound him in the Realtors' next two assignments.

Duremdes has been sidelined for the past three games after a calf injury he sustained in practice two days prior to the PBA Fiesta Conference relegated the 1998 MVP to the injury list again.

"I'm giving myself one last chance. If the pain is still there, maybe it is time to seek an opinion in the US," said Duremdes.

The scores:

TALK 'N TEXT 97—Honeycutt 26, Taulava 20, Pablo 14, Alapag 13, de ocampo 10, Miller 7, Fran 5, Belano 2, Ravena 0.

PUREFOODS 93—Elisma 20, Castillo 16, Raymundo 14, Aratadi 13, Simon 11, Patrimonio 7, Yee 7, Demape 3, Johnson 2, Evangelista 0, Sotto 0.

Quarters: 31-24, 53-43, 80-70, 97-93

Manotoc pulls out of NGAP elections

From page A25

original 19.

The spate of withdrawals came after Manotoc gave up efforts to infuse new blood, especially those coming from exclusive clubs, into the NGAP.

Manotoc and incumbent NGAP president Rod Feliciano had been holding conciliatory talks the past few weeks ever since the former declared his intention to seek the presidency.

Manotoc said Feliciano knew of his decision to set aside his presidential bid if he is allowed to put four directors of his choice into the board and no director or his family be allowed to do business with the association.

"But Mr. Feliciano could not commit to either of these," Manotoc rued.

Manotoc also took note of the "very strong military presence" in the list of nominees, saying it will further alienate the clubs who terminated their NGAP membership following recriminations over the handling of the Ericsson Tour.

"It's still very fresh (the Ericsson affair) in everyone's minds. My vision of unifying the different golf clubs under the NGAP will no longer be possible."

Feliciano, for his part, expressed regret over Manotoc's decision.

"It's too bad because there are people who wanted him (Manotoc) to be in the board. But it's really their prerogative," said Feliciano.

Feliciano added that he could not easily commit to Manotoc's preconditions because there are rules and procedures to be followed.

Manotoc also bared that he's in the process of negotiating with the Philippine Golf Foundation on the implementation of an amateur golf development program that he said has been non-existent for the past several years.

Among those left to contest the board seats are Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Transportation and Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza and two other retired military generals, Roberto Sabularse (Villamor) and Roberto Santiago (Aguinaldo).

The NGAP had run the Ericsson Tour for the country's pro golfers several years back but was later criticized for its alleged mishandling of the $1-million budget for the event.

RP-Burlington cagers play 'kuyas' to kids

BEING with the RP-Burlington Youth Team is not all about playing basketball. The players are also taught the values of self-discipline, social service and humanitarian concern.

The remaining candidates of the squad competing in the coming Southeast Asia Basketball Association Junior Championship pleasantly learned about this Tuesday, when they spent time with the children at the Our Lady of Guadalupe Angel's Home on Avocado Street in Marcelo Green Village, Parañaque.

Made up of 18-and-under players, the RP team quickly warmed up to the 45 street children and orphans living in the facility being run by the Bata Foundation of Father O'Brien.

The Nationals served food to the children and distributed presents like Burlington socks, vitamins and volleyballs and basketballs courtesy of Teamsports, producer of the Seaba TV coverage. They taught the kids, aged 3 to 13, basic basketball skills such as passing and dribbling.

What delighted the children most was the installation of a collapsible basketball board and ring that replaced their broken down, makeshift board.

In return, the children entertained their visitors, whom they fondly referred to as 'Kuyas,' with song and dance numbers. They also promised their 'Kuyas' that everyday, at 6 p.m., they would pray for their success in the Seaba tournament slated April 14-19 in Lucena City.

Edith Caingles, secretary of the foundation's board of trustees and treasurer Gloria Fernandez accepted the Nationals' donations on behalf of the kids.

Burlington GM Rudy Tan arranged the Nationals' visit to Angel's Home as part of the players' total training and character development. He also expressed his gratitude to Basketball Association of the Philippines president Tiny Literal for making the Angel's Home visit part of the BAP's Outreach Program.

Tan hopes that the interaction with the destitute children will inspire the Nationals to work harder to regain the junior title they yielded to the Malaysians in Kuala Lumpur in 2002.

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Champ Quirimit seeks piece of Tour history

QUIRIMIT: Eyeing a 2nd straight victory

ARNEL Quirimit stares history in the eye, but several crack riders are out to spoil his bid in the 2004 Tour Pilipinas that hits the road in 13 days.

Quirimit, the pride of Pozorrubio, Pangasinan, who turns 29 this Good Friday, is favored to become only the sixth cyclist to win a bikathon back-to-back. And what a year to pull it off—exactly a decade after the last to pull it off, a shy and unassuming rider from Bagabag, Nueva Vizcaya, Carlo Guieb, shamed everyone.

Quirimit beamed when told of the milestone that's within his reach. "I'm prepared for it. It's nice to be a back-to-back champion," he said.

The late Jose Sumalde first turned the trick in 1964-65, Tour Pilipinas legal and race consultant Cornelio Padilla Jr. did it in 1966-67 and the late Jacinto Sicam prevailed in 1981-82.

Quirimit ruled the 2003 Tour revival riding for Tanduay, but whether he would remain a Rhum Rider won't be known until Monday when the 84 cyclists are assigned evenly to 12 squads of seven riders each during the 2004 Tour's launch.

Tour chair Bert Lina, whose Air21 is again principally bankrolling the 17-stage, 21-day odyssey that offers over P4.7 million in prizes, has linked up with ABS-CBN, which will provide live TV coverage through Studio 23s.

Quirimit, the 1994 top rookie whose first-stage win that year turned dramatic after he reunited with his long-lost soldier father in Cagayan de Oro, gets to ice his preparation with a crack at an Olympic slot in the individual time trial in the Asian Cycling Championships next week in Yokaichi City, Japan. With him in the Athens qualifier are potential Tour rivals Warren Davadilla, Enrique Domingo and rookie Dante Cagas.

Tour organizer and Air21 president Lito Alvarez said this year's mixture of "the old and the veterans provides the wisdom and experience to the young, enthusiastic future heroes of cycling."

HOLD it right there: Taiwan's Hsu Weh-Hsin moves in for a forehand drive.
ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

LANCER TENNIS

Briton knocks out top seed

By Marc Anthony Reyes

TOM Rushby of Great Britain bucked the torrid noonday heat to upset top seed Karan Rastogi of India, 1-6, 6-2, 6-1, yesterday and gain the quarterfinals of the Mitsubishi Lancer International tennis championships at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Rushby raised the level of his game starting in the second set after a tentative start to book a quarterfinal slot against No. 8 Lachlan Ferguson of Australia.

"I had a bad first set. Fortunately I improved on my shots while he was making many mistakes," said the 17-year-old Rushby, who was eliminated here in the quarterfinals last year.

"I think I have a big chance going for the title here because of this victory and the momentum I got winning in Malaysia two weeks ago," added Rushby, seeded ninth here.

Ferguson earlier defeated No. 14 Antal Vab Der Duim of Netherlands, 6-4, 6-3.

Unseeded Irish Tristan Mahon Farron again provided excitement for the crowd after scoring his second straight shocker.

Farron added Australian Todd Ley to his list of victims, 6-4, 6-3, after earlier ousting No. 2 Remko de Rijke. He will next face No. 11 Jamie Murray of Great Britain, who eliminated world's No. 33 and tournament sixth seed Divij Sharan, 3-6, 6-3, 7-5.

In other matches, Australian Joel Kerley bundled out qualifier Victor Bogi Leonte of Romania, 6-0, 6-3, to set up a meeting with seventh seed Tushar Liberhan of Netherlands. Liberhand beat Austria's Philipp Oswald, 7-5, 6-3.

New Zealand's William Ward, seeded fourth here, bested Indonesian Sunu Wahyl Trijati, 6-4, 6-1, to advance against fifth seed Coen Van Kuelen of Netherlands, who nipped India's Rupesh Roy, 6-1, 4-6, 6-2.

Girls top seed Chan Yung Jan of Chinese Taipei handily defeated Australia's Daniella Dominikovic, 6-1, 6-1. She will take on fifth seed Tatjana Malek, who edged Chinese No. 9 Zhang Shuai of China, 6-2, 3-6, 6-4.

No. 14 Caroline Wozniacki of Denmark brought down Sanaa Bhambri of India, 4-6, 7-5, 6-2, while Bianca Bonifante ousted sixth seed Hwang I-Hsuan, 6-0, 6-2.

Second seed Hsu Weh-Hsin of Chinese Taipei disposed of Hanne Skak Jensen of Denmark, 6-0, 6-0, to arrange a meeting with Korean Kim So Jung, who beat Chinese Liu Wan Ting (6-3, 6-4).

Torpedoing 'Thorpedo'

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

THE CASE of Ian Thorpe should be the inspiration of all. Small fish. Big fish. Man on the street. Leaders in government. Janitors. Chairmen/CEOs/Presidents. Ball boy/water boy. Coaches/team managers. They all ought to learn a thing or two from the Ian Thorpe case.

And what was the Ian Thorpe case all about again?

It was a case of applying the rules.

Looks so simple and yet, many among us in this strange world still view some basic things with wonder, if not cynicism. To cite but one case, even FPJ's candidacy continues to baffle the so-called intelligentsia, calling FPJ names and accusing him as unfit for the presidency in a manner as though FPJ has become the most unqualified Filipino ever to seek Malacañang. Doesn't the Constitution say that FPJ is qualified to run and therefore he has as much right to enter Malacañang once he wins the May 10 polls—facts that our Supreme Court had ruled with finality some weeks back? Their main beef with FPJ: He is a "mere movie actor." If we follow their reasoning, boxing idol Manny Pacquiao cannot also be president of this republic because he is a "mere boxer." Or Valentin Dakuykoy's boyhood chum, Pedro Muryoti, cannot also be chief executive of this country because he is a "mere carpenter." To them, only the "intelligent" can become good presidents; movie actors, boxers, carpenters, farmers, etc., are not, cannot be, intelligent.

Oh, well.

But to go back to Ian Thorpe.

Ian Thorpe, in case you still don't know, is not only a sports icon in Australia. He also happens to be the world's No. 1 swimmer the last six years.

In 1998, Ian Thorpe, then 15, shook the world when he ruled the world's 400-meter freestyle—the youngest ever to do the trick. Five times in five years, he has broken the world record in this event. Ian Thorpe's record of 3 minutes and 40.08 seconds in the said event still stands.

Although I was covering the Sydney Olympics in 2000 where he hauled three gold medals for Australia, I failed to watch him perform in the flesh. I was then preoccupied with covering the Filipino athletes' own battles that performances by non-Filipino entries had to take the backseat.

But still, I felt the impact of Ian Thorpe's golden triumphs as evidenced by the Australian media's total concentration on Ian Thorpe's exploits on the pool. It was so thorough a media blitz you'd think then that the world had but one superstar: Ian Thorpe. From page one up to the last page of every newspaper, you'd see nothing but the face of Ian Thorpe. "Thorpedo" they named him. Just as apt.

Now to the meat of this piece.

Did you know that just last week, Ian Thorpe was disqualified in the 400-meter freestyle, his favorite event?

But before the nitty-gritty, consider this.

As I said, Ian Thorpe holds the world record in the 400-meter event. Shouldn't he be seeded into the Athens Olympics set this August?

No, the Australian swimming officials ruled.

And so, Ian Thorpe, like an ordinary swimmer that he was not, had to go through the qualifying tournament.

However, by the weirdest of circumstances, Ian Thorpe fell while on the diving board during the qualifying heats.

Referee John Keppie saw it otherwise and disqualified Ian Thorpe for a "false start." The 400-meter observes the one-start rule and anybody making a false start on the first dive is automatically disqualified. Ironically, the rule was adopted the year Thorpe became world champion in 1998.

It was an accident, said Ian Thorpe, an argument bitterly backed up by the swimmer's home club and David Flaskas, Thorpe's manager. Ian Thorpe said he was disturbed by a noise, causing him to lose his balance and fell into the pool.

But Keppie stood firm on his decision. After a review of the incident by the three-person jury, Keppie's ruling was upheld.

And what did we hear from Flaskas and Thorpe's club after the final decision was handed down?

"The rules are the rules," they said.

I drink to that.

Look, Ian Thorpe is a national treasure, a gold medal winner—almost—in Athens this August since, as I said, the 400-meter freestyle is his favorite. Yet, they disqualified him.

There's a ton of lessons actually to be learned here but one thing stands out: No one person is bigger than an institution—the Olympiad being one of them. The Australians have reminded us of that once more.

Maybe, just maybe, if that happened here, the rules might have been bended. One gold is one gold is one gold? I don't know.

But I do know—and the world knows—that after Ian Thorpe got disqualified, he returned to the pool like a true sportsman and went on to top his two other events lined up for the day: the 100- and 200-meter races.

If that happened here and the one disqualified had the stature of an Ian Thorpe, I wouldn't be surprised if that Ian Thorpe of the Philippines would walk out of his remaining qualifying heats.

I wouldn't be surprised, too, that after the walkout, many of our so-called leaders would raise hell and demand that those responsible for disqualifying the "superstar" be torpedoed till kingdom come.

Thank God, it happened in Australia.

SPORTSWATCH

Kapunan, Rodriguez rule AJ golf

ROLAND Kapunan and Tony Rodriguez took top honors in the 1st AJ Cup Golf Tournament held on March 26 at the West Course of the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club, Mandaluyong City. Kapunan, who submitted a 69, was adjudged low gross champion, while Rodriguez scored a 68 to emerge as low net champion in the event organized by the All For Jesus Marriage Encounter Series headed by chair couple Robert and Tinette Aventajado. Rey Bolano, who had a 73, was runner-up in the low gross division, while Gerry Kadagan fell a stroke short with a 69 and ended up as runner-up to Rodriguez in the low net division. Kapunan and Rodriguez bested 68 other entries in the tournament supported by POC chair Aventajado. Other winners were Walter Navarro, Billby Gualberto, Jayjay Millonado and Bolano. Navarro and Gualberto won "nearest to the pin" honors, with Navarro driving nearest to hole No. 8 and Gualberto to hole No. 14. Millonado, on the other hand, had the most accurate drive in No. 12, while Bolano had the longest drive at hole No. 4. Omel and Me-an Capati, chair couple of the Sports and Recreation Committee of the All for Jesus Marriage Encounter Series, handed out the trophies to the winners.

Badminton 14-under listing ends today

THE JVC Open Badminton 14-under Championships registry is likely to swell with a big number of entries expected to beat the deadline for registration today. The organizing International Management Group (IMG) said the listup will end at 5 p.m. For details, call IMG (Agnes or Joann) at 751-6752/845-0162 or Rene or Timmy at 725-2568/725-4942. Drawing of lots will be conducted on April 12 at the fifth level of SM Manila's Entertainment Plaza. The tournament, exclusively for players 14 years old and below, fires off April 16 at the SM Megamall. First round winners will advance to the next stage which Pampanga will host on April 24-25. The event is supported by Alaska, Accel, Gosen, Toby's Sports, Pioneer Insurance, Lactacyd, Tokyo Tokyo, The Philippine STAR, Agfa and Rudy Project.

Over 200 jins to compete in Cebu

TOP notch taekwondo action unfolds in Cebu City this weekend when over 200 jins vie for top honors in three divisions in Samsung's best-of-the-best taekwondo championships at SM Cebu. The two-day tournament, one of the two regional championships—the other being the Davao event on May 15-16—put up by the sponsoring Samsung as part of its commitment to discover, tap and develop talents from the countryside, has lured bets from Bacolod, Iloilo, Dumaguete, Samar, Leyte and the host province. Berths in the national finals set later this year at Glorietta, Makati are at stake in the tournament held under the auspices of the Philippine Taekwondo Association.

Split decision victory for Sales

MARK "The Slam Man" Sales pulled off a split decision victory over Jimboy "Pretty Boy" Rodriguez in the quarterfinal round of the Philippine Pro-Boxing League National Invitational Junior Bantamweight Championship recently. Sales, who ousted VISPROBA No.4 Ronnie "The Ransom" Cañete in the eliminations, knocked down Rodriguez with a thunderous left hook in the third round and that proved decisive as two of the three judges picked him as winner. The win sent Sales into the semifinals against PBF king Roselito "Tornado" Campaña in the four-stage stepladder tournament supported by Tanduay Rhum and Lactovitale. TV Boxing analyst Ted Lerner criticized the decision, saying that Rodriguez came back from the knockdown to land clear and solid counter-punches that kept Sales at bay.

Virtusio heads HSBC golf winners

DRESDNER Bank CEO Cesar Virtusio, Manuel Agojo, Jose del Rosario and Linnel de Villa topped their respective divisions in the recent HSBC Golf Invitational held at the EagleRidge Golf and Country Club in General Trias, Cavite. Virtusio ruled the silver division, Agojo the gold, Del Rosario the bronze, and De Villa the ladies of the event participated in by HSBC's premier customers, corporate clients and special friends at the Norman, Faldo and Dye courses of EagleRidge. Benita Obiena made a hole-in-one at #17 of the Faldo course and was rewarded with a shopping money worth P50,000 loaded onto an HSBC Mabuhay Miles Visa Gold card. Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura, Bankers Association of the Philippines executive director Leonilo Coronel and HSBC CEO Warner Manning led the ceremonial tee-off.

Young Knights Invitational Cup

THE YOUNG Knights Invitational Cup reels off at 9 a.m. tomorrow at the Trade Hall of Starmall located at Edsa corner Shaw Boulevard in Mandaluyong City. The two-day event is exclusively for those who have attended at least two or more levels of Milo Checkmate clinic since its inception 14 years ago. The champion in this first ever competition among Checkmates will win P8,000; second placer—P5,000; third—P3,000; fourth—P2,000 and fifth—P1,000. Hostilities start at 9 a.m. Deadline for signing up is until today. For details, call 826-8560 and 0916-8521069. Entry fee is P130 for currently enrolled and P230 for not enrolled.

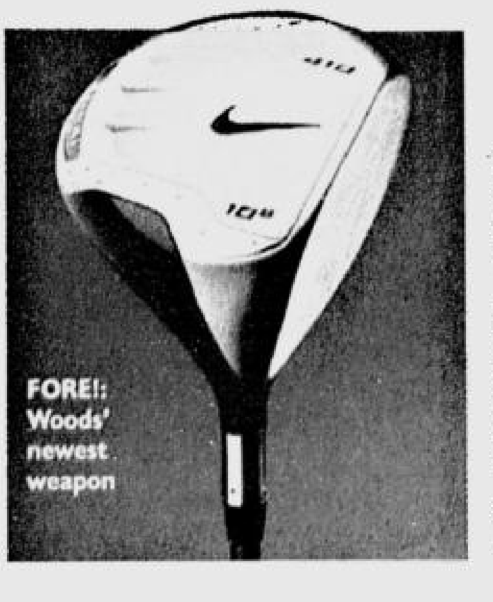
Sta. Lucia-Pasig tryouts today

A SERIES of tryouts will be held by the Sta. Lucia Realty-Pasig team for the PBA Juniors tournament starting today at the Barangay Sumilang Gym in Pasig. Geared for city residents aged 9-12 years, the tryouts are set from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. today and tomorrow and will be conducted by Realtors assistant coach Cholo Martin. The tryouts shift to the Pasig Sports Center (formerly Carruncho Gym) on April 5-7, also from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. The PBA Juniors tournament starts April 18.

3-on-3 barangay basketball challenge

7-ELEVEN, the country's premier convenience store, in cooperation with house brand Gulp, is launching the first ever 3-on-3 barangay basketball challenge from May 19 to June 5. According to Randy Mapa Yap, category manager for 7-Eleven, the Gulp 3-on-3 Siete-Onse basketball tournament is a reaffirmation of the company's global commitment to being a good neighbor in communities where there are 7-Eleven stores. The tournament is open to all male players from the Greater Manila area and outlying provinces, aged 11-17 for the juniors division and male players aged 18-25 for the seniors division. At stake is a total of P2 million.

Tiger long, consistent with Ignite driver



FORE!: Woods' newest weapon

RARELY is attention more focused on one golfer and his equipment than when Tiger Woods adds something new (or something old) to his bag.

Nike Golf's Ignite driver took golf equipment's center stage as a prototype in Woods' bag late in the season last year with the eyes of the industry's toughest critics—and even a few people outside of Nike Golf—watching to see how it would perform in its debut.

The result was Woods' fifth victory of 2003 which became one of the reasons why he was named Player of the Year for the fifth consecutive year.

Woods averaged 312.8 yards off the tee over the four days of the WGC American Express Championship, up 13.5 yards over his average (299.3) coming into the event.

The Ignite features a new titanium-based face material that gives golfers greater distance and control.

"I hit it great. It was nice to hit some of those nice high draws out there again," said Woods in an interview after his first practice round with the Ignite.

"First hole, hit a high one out there, second one, same thing, third hole, fourth, fifth hole, I drove it well over the green. It's nice to be able to hit that type of shot again and still have the ability to be able to curve one left to right."

Up, too, was Woods' confidence off the tee at the Crabapple course, the set-up of which Woods likened to that of a major championship course.

"Well, any time you can shape a drive, for me... I can step up there with a left-to-right wind and know that I can hit that ball and hold it. That to me is huge," said Woods in his post-event press conference.

"That's how I play. This driver enables me to do that. It kind of frees you up to go ahead."

The Ignite driver will soon be available at the following Pacsports golf pro shops and golf specialty stores: Erechem Bldg., Salcedo corner Herrera Streets, Legaspi Village, Makati; SM Podium, Pasig; Festival Mall, Alabang; Greenhills Car Park Building, Greenhills Shopping Center, San Juan; Manila Golf & Country Club; Wack Wack Golf & Country Club; Alabang Country Club; Club Malarayat and the Valley Golf & Country Club. Suggested retail price is P29,995.00.

Pacers win, clinch Central Division title

CORIA celebrates beating Kiefer. AFP

INDIANAPOLIS—Ron Artest had 21 points and nine rebounds, and Jermaine O'Neal had 16 points and seven assists Wednesday as the Indiana Pacers clinched the Central Division title with a 111-78 win over the Milwaukee Bucks.

The Pacers, an NBA-leading 55-20, secured homecourt advantage throughout the Eastern Conference playoffs when they beat the Bucks for the first time in four tries this season.

"We've got a bigger goal to deal with and that's trying to get the playoffs throughout," Jermaine O'Neal said. "We want to make sure the entire playoffs come through here."

It also allowed Rick Carlisle to join Pat Riley as the only coaches in NBA history to win a division title in each of their first three years coaching. Carlisle was tops in the division twice with Detroit before coming to Indiana this year.

"I've been lucky. I've had good players all three years," Carlisle said. "It's great fortune for me."

Seven Pacers scored in double figures, including Al Harrington, who had 14 points and 10 rebounds.

Toni Kukoc, Milwaukee's high scorer, scored all 15 of his points in the second quarter to help close the gap and the Bucks went into halftime down 50-37.

In Boston, Darius Miles scored a career-high 31 points and led a third-quarter surge that carried Portland to win over Boston.

Miles had 10 points as Portland opened the third quarter with a 20-6 run that turned a 51-48 halftime deficit into a 68-57 lead midway through the period.

Zach Randolph had 18 points and 11 rebounds for the Blazers, who held a 44-30 advantage on the boards. The Celtics were led by Ricky Davis with 27 points and Paul Pierce with 23. *AP*

Complete results: Portland 105, Boston 98; New Jersey 103, Washington 99 (OT); Chicago 109, Orlando 91; Indiana 111, Milwaukee 78; Miami 100, Atlanta 97; Golden State 85, Toronto 78; Detroit 108, LA Clippers 99; Minnesota 90, Seattle 83; San Antonio 107, Sacramento 89; Utah 89, New Orleans 76.

Williams exits; Coria in semis

MIAMI, Florida—Second-seeded Venus Williams was knocked out of the Nasdaq-100 Open, 6-3, 5-7, 7-6, by Russia's Elena Dementieva in the quarterfinals on Wednesday as the American battled to shake off a foot injury.

The fifth-seeded Dementieva got off to the more consistent start and could have won in straight sets but failed to close out the match when serving at 5-4 in the second.

Williams was hindered by a foot injury two games later at 6-5 and 30-30 when she landed awkwardly after a forehand.

The American was forced to take a three-minute injury timeout while she received treatment and had the foot heavily strapped by WTA trainer Lisa Heller.

Despite the injury, Williams got to set point in the next game and leveled the match when Dementieva's forehand sailed long.

Third seed Guillermo Coria of Argentina became the first man into the semifinals when he overwhelmed Nicolas Kiefer, 6-3, 6-3. *Reuters*

McGrady injured

ORLANDO, Florida—Orlando Magic guard Tracy McGrady, on the verge of winning his second straight National Basketball Association scoring title, was placed on the injured list here Wednesday with a sore left knee.

McGrady has missed the past two games with patella tendinitis and must sit out another three before he is eligible to return on April 8 against the New Jersey Nets.

He is averaging an NBA-best 28 points with 6.0 rebounds, 5.5 assists and 1.39 steals in 39.9 minutes per game, all team highs. *AFP*

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Racelas basketball clinic set

SAN MIGUEL playmaker Olsen Racela and brother Nash Racela, an assistant coach with Coca-Cola, give kids a chance to enhance their basketball skills this summer with the Racela-MPG 2004 Summer Program at the Ateneo de Manila covered courts. The camp will run from April 17 to May 15. Interested parties may sign up at the MPG office at Unit 602, Manila Luxury Condominium, Pearl Drive corner Goldloop, Ortigas Center. For inquiries, call 635-3257.

RACING

AT STA. ANA BY MR. 999

Race 1--1. Rose in Bloom 2 Dreams of Flame 3 Good Quality

Race 2--1. Glamour 2. Bag-girl

Race 3--1 Island King 2 Wild Orphan 3. Baby My Beloved

Race 4--1 Musika 2 Selectee 3. Daytona 4 Race for Gold

Race 5--1 Silver Lining 2 Kantayok 3 Material Trick 4 Sir Lawrence

Race 6--1. Korek Ka Dyan 2 Freedom Bell 3. Habagat 4. Angel Eyes 5. Boy For Brazil

Race 7--1 All Powerful 2 Skip Away 3 Secret Marshall 4. Dynamic Jason 5 Magical Jude

Race 8--1. Might and Power 2. Sacred Hall 3. Power Pack 4. Gold Pyramid

Race 9--1. La Vida 2 Mina Sa Isla 3 Roulette Queen/Shotgun Banjo 4 No Compromise 5 Be Rearly 6 Orredan

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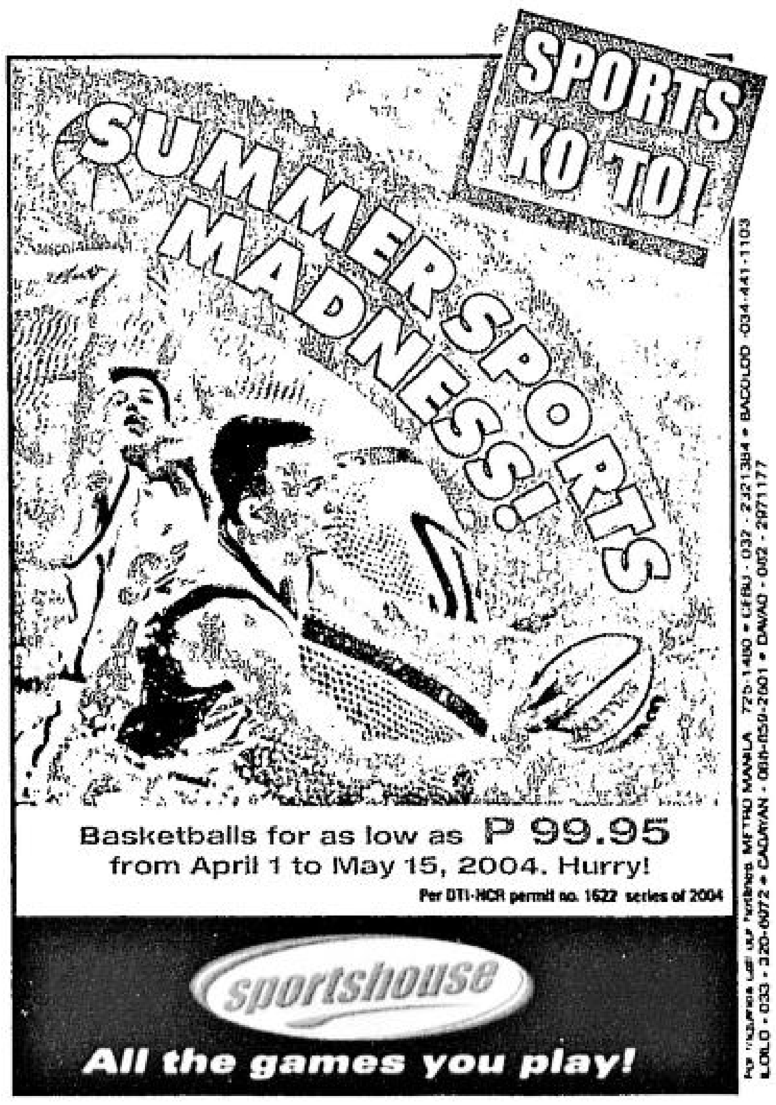

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Dolphy gets his second wind

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WHEN **Dolphy**'s ABS-CBN sitcom, "Home Along Da Airport," was recently reported to be on the way out, rumors had it that the reason wasn't low ratings, as initially reported, but the comedy king's decision to campaign for FPJ rather than GMA, who was supposed to be ABS-CBN's candidate of choice.

Ano ba talaga, kuya? Right away, ABS-CBN spokespersons debunked the political twist that was being imposed on the "strictly show business" development. That left the "low ratings" motive, which the network also debunked by showing ratings figures indicating that the sitcom wasn't faring all that badly, after all.

So, why the "discussions" with Dolphy regarding the future of his comedy show? If the sitcom was doing well, why the reassessment?

After a few more days, the issue was rendered moot when ABS-CBN announced that Dolphy's show would tape some new episodes.

For our part, we decided to view "Home Along Da Airport" last Saturday, to see how well the show was faring on point of quality and entertainment value.

The last few times we viewed the sitcom some months ago, we noted that Dolphy was figuring in only a few episodes, while the bulk of the show focused on its other regular performers.

We took this as a sign that the star comic's advancing years were taking their toll on the energy and visibility of his performance.

In last Monday's episode, however, that no longer appeared to be a problem, since Dolphy figured prominently in the sitcom's sequences.

> Why the "discussions" with Dolphy regarding the future of his comedy show? If the sitcom was doing well, why the reassessment?

Clearly, the veteran comedian seems to have gotten his second wind as a performer, and that's all to the good.

On the debit side, the episode had an unfocused storyline. More or less it had something to do with water shortage hitting the show's neighborhood, and there was a subplot about Dolphy being visited by some relatives who were "giants."

After a while, however, the storytelling began to stray, and a lot of time was devoted, not to developing the plot and the show's characters, but to unrelated jokes, gags, punchlines and comic sketches.

This is typical of local sitcoms, and a reason why so many of our comedy shows lack unity and thematic coherence.

Ironically, it also results in less humor, not more. This is because comedy needs a sense of context, and the unrelated jokes so often found in local situation comedies don't have it.

The "Home Along" show is also weighed down by its huge cast of regular actors. They're so many that most of them don't get to do much in the course of an episode. The effect is messy and unfocused, to say the least.

Why are so many regular actors hired? It must be because the network believes that each actor has his cadre of fans, so if all of its actors' fans are pooled together, the sitcom is assured of a huge audience, and thus of high ratings.

This doesn't pan out, of course, because an actor's fans wouldn't be exactly thrilled to see their idol doing so little in the show.

Well, that must add to the sitcom's current woes, which would be why a reevaluation of its future was recently deemed to be in order. In any case, the crisis has been postponed for now. But, if the show we caught last Monday is any indication, the sitcom's problems persist.

'Peter Pan'

JAMES Barrie's "Peter Pan" has been performed onstage for 100 years, and has had several film productions, but Columbia Pictures' new movie version is eliciting fresh interest because its fantasy storytelling has been further enriched and enlivened by state-of-the-art visual effects created by leading SFX shop Industrial Light and Magic.

Director **P.J. Hogan** took full advantage of the new technology—but not at the expense of the story's heart. After all, he pointed out, "Peter Pan" is fantasy, not science fiction. And he was adamant that the story's signature fantasy elements be depicted as a child might imagine them.

Hogan's "Peter Pan" opens locally on April 10.

John Woo's 'Paycheck'

JOHN Woo, director of blockbusters like "Mission Impossible 2" and "Face/Off," has come up with his latest action-suspense production, "Paycheck," starring **Ben Affleck** and **Uma Thurman.**

Affleck plays the challenging role of Michael Jennings, a world-famous genius hired by high-tech corporations for top-secret projects. On his latest case, however, his memory is erased and he can avoid being killed only if he is able to decipher the meaning of some random objects that turn out to be clues to his past.

In the business of making stars

FOR ABS-CBN Talent Development and Management Center (TDMC), stars are not born: they are made. And making them is a painstaking process.

A veteran in the business of making stars, Talent Center believes that the way to stardom involves a lot of nurturing a person's potential, honing his skills and developing his talent. So that what people see on screen of their favorite stars is a product of many hours of grueling training in various aspects of *buhay-artista.*

Now home to about 200 contract artists, Talent Center remains under the tutelage of star mentor and television and film director Johnny Manahan, who is involved in the holistic training and management of stars aged 7-27. Talent Center also has a 200-member Artist Registry of second leads and character actors, aged 20-70, from the stage, who provide salient support to ABS-CBN shows and films.

DID YOU KNOW...

When **Rico Yan's** remains were transferred recently to a mausoleum, also inside Manila Memorial Park in Parañaque City, actress **Judy Ann Santos** stood in one corner and prayed with the Yan Family. March 27 marked Rico's third death anniversary. It was also his birthday last March 7. He would have been 29.

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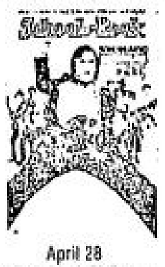

April 28
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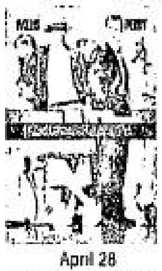

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SCOOBY DOO 2 GP 11:40, 1:40, 3:40, 5:40, 7:40, 9:40	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST PG13 12:30, 3:10, 5:50, 8:30	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST PG13 1:00, 3:40, 6:20, 9:00
THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST PG13 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST PG13 1:30, 4:10, 6:50, 9:30	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST PG13 11:50, 2:30, 5:10, 7:50, 10:30

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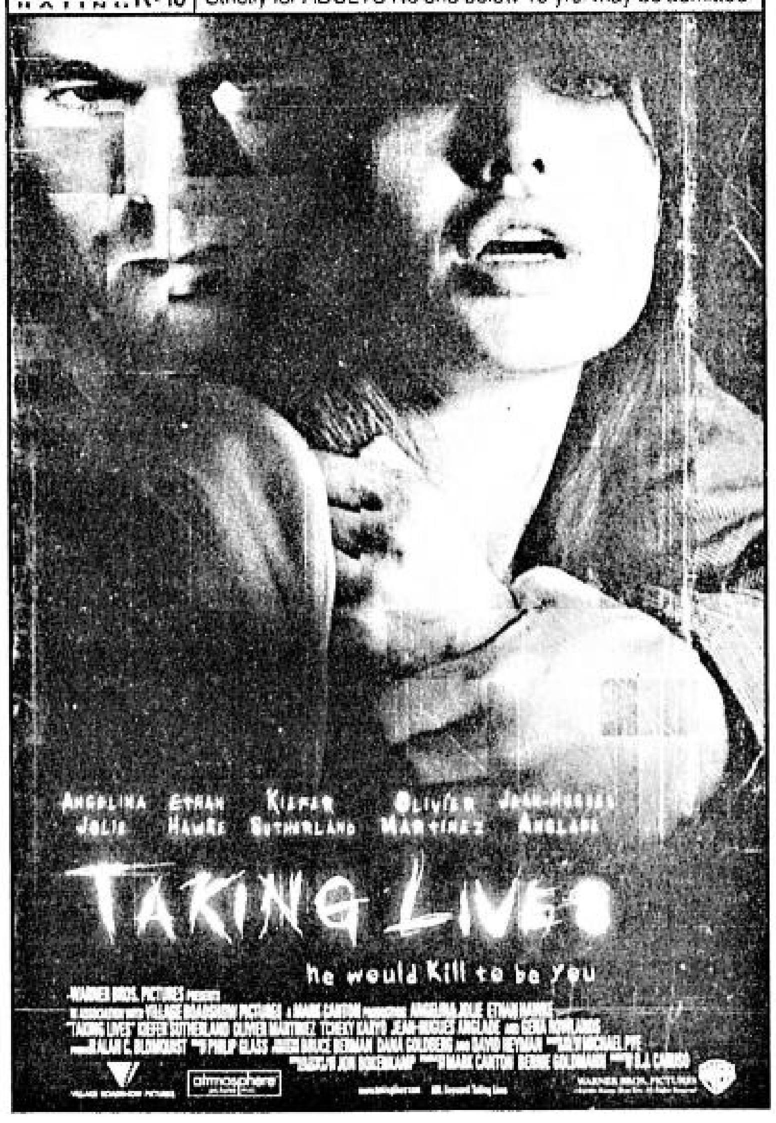
OPENS APRIL 10!
MTRCB RATING R-18 Strictly for ADULTS No one below 18 yrs may be admitted



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CINEMAS
See it At its Best!

Prince becomes online retailer, selling his songs from his site

PRINCE'S love-hate relationship with the mainstream music industry takes another turn last Monday as he opens his online Musicology Download Store (www.npgmusic-club.com), turning his back on download services like Napster, Rhapsody and Apple's iTunes.

The move comes a week after Prince appeared to be cottoning to an industry he once compared to a form of slavery, announcing that he would team with Sony Music Entertainment's Columbia Records to release his new album, "Musicology."

Prince's lawyer and business partner, L. Londell McMillan, said the store was intended to increase membership in Prince's NPG Music Club. Ideally, customers "come there, buy songs, see the experience and go, 'Wow, I want to stay.'"

"We want to drive traffic to the club," he said. A lifetime membership to the club is $25 and offers exclusive songs, early access to concert tickets and other benefits. Sam Jennings, who helped start the club for Prince, declined to reveal the number of members, but a news release put it in the "hundreds of thousands."

$9.99 per album

Prince's download store will sell music for which he owns the master recordings. It opens with seven albums of studio and live material, some of which were previously available only to members of the NPG Music Club. Full albums will sell for $9.99 and individual songs for 99 cents; club members will pay 77 cents per song.

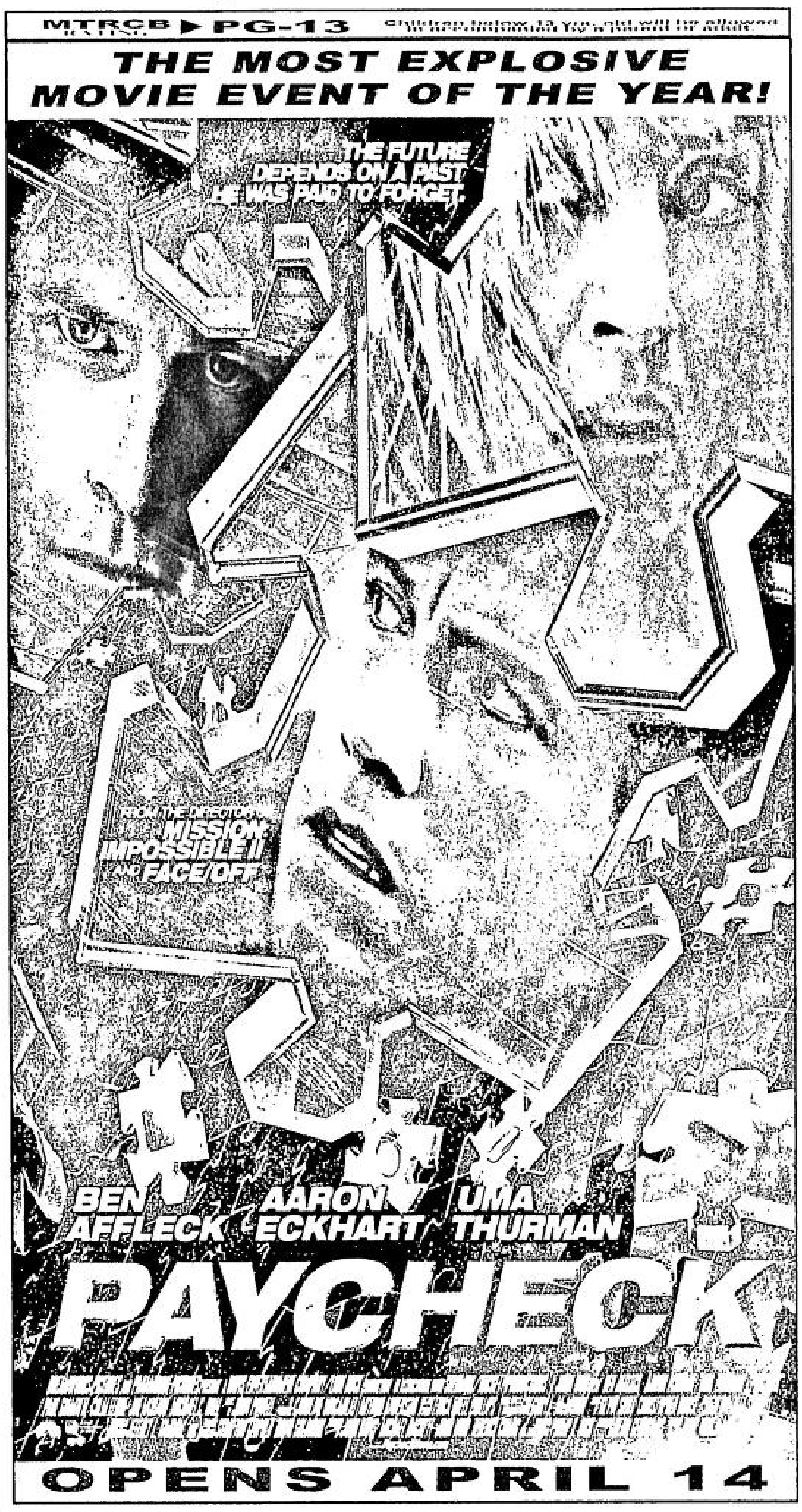
The Musicology Download Store will not sell Prince's best-known albums like "Purple Rain," "1999" and "Sign 'O' the Times." Those albums are owned by Warner Brothers and available through iTunes, Rhapsody and other services.

Most artists receive a part of the 65 or 70 cents that their labels receive from a 99-cent download sale at online stores, said Josh Bernoff, a vice president at Forrester Research. He said Prince could sell half as many songs through the store and still make more money than through sales at a store like iTunes.

Bands like Phish, Pearl Jam and Metallica have also established download stores, although those websites primarily offer live music.

Since he left Warner Brothers Records in 1996, Prince has released most of his albums through his own labels and one, "Rave Un2 the Joy Fantastic," through Arista.

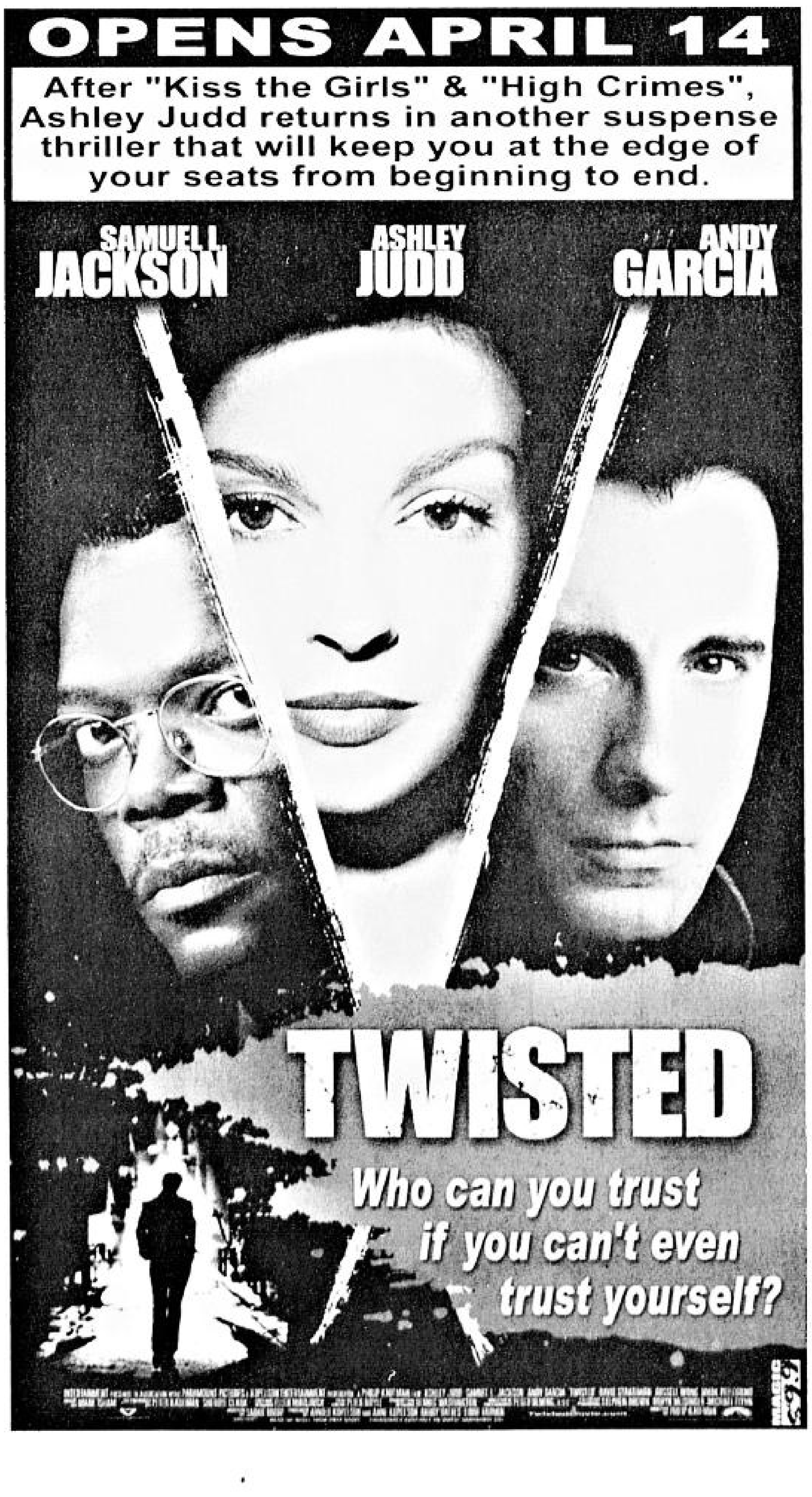
On Monday night fans will be able to watch a simulcast of his concert in Los Angeles at movie theaters across the country. The $15 admission fee at the theaters includes a copy of "Musicology." *New York Times*


MTRCB RATING ▸ PG-13

THE MOST EXPLOSIVE MOVIE EVENT OF THE YEAR!

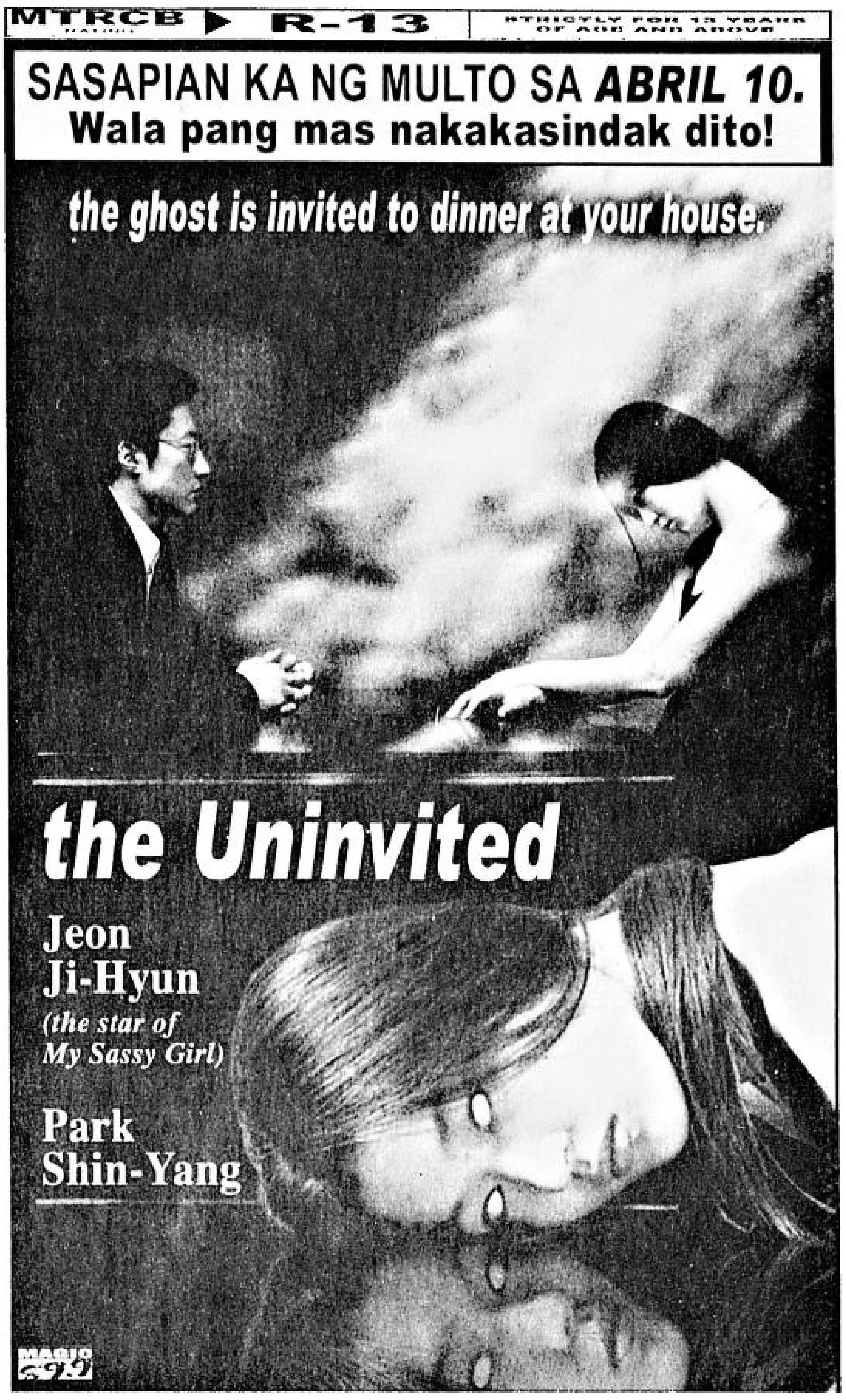
THE FUTURE DEPENDS ON A PAST HE WAS PAID TO FORGET.
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE II AND FACE/OFF
BEN AFFLECK
AARON ECKHART
UMA THURMAN
PAYCHECK

OPENS APRIL 14


OPENS APRIL 14

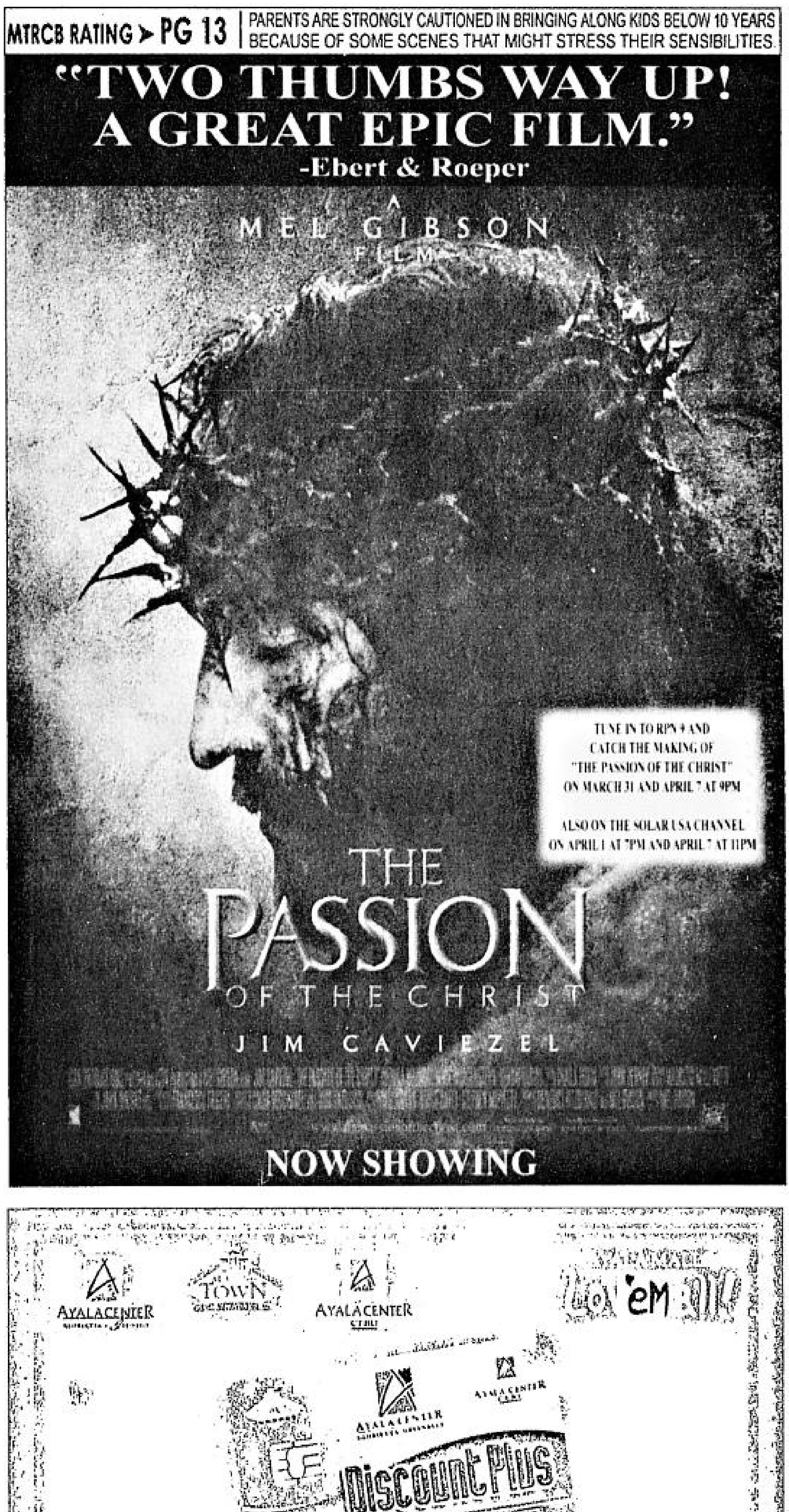
After "Kiss the Girls" & "High Crimes", Ashley Judd returns in another suspense thriller that will keep you at the edge of your seats from beginning to end.

SAMUEL L. JACKSON
ASHLEY JUDD
ANDY GARCIA
TWISTED
Who can you trust if you can't even trust yourself?


MTRCB ▸ R-13

SASAPIAN KA NG MULTO SA *ABRIL 10.*
Wala pang mas nakakasindak dito!

the ghost is invited to dinner at your house.
the Uninvited
Jeon Ji-Hyun
(the star of My Sassy Girl)
Park Shin-Yang


MTRCB RATING ▸ PG 13 | PARENTS ARE STRONGLY CAUTIONED IN BRINGING ALONG KIDS BELOW 10 YEARS BECAUSE OF SOME SCENES THAT MIGHT STRESS THEIR SENSIBILITIES.

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-Ebert & Roeper

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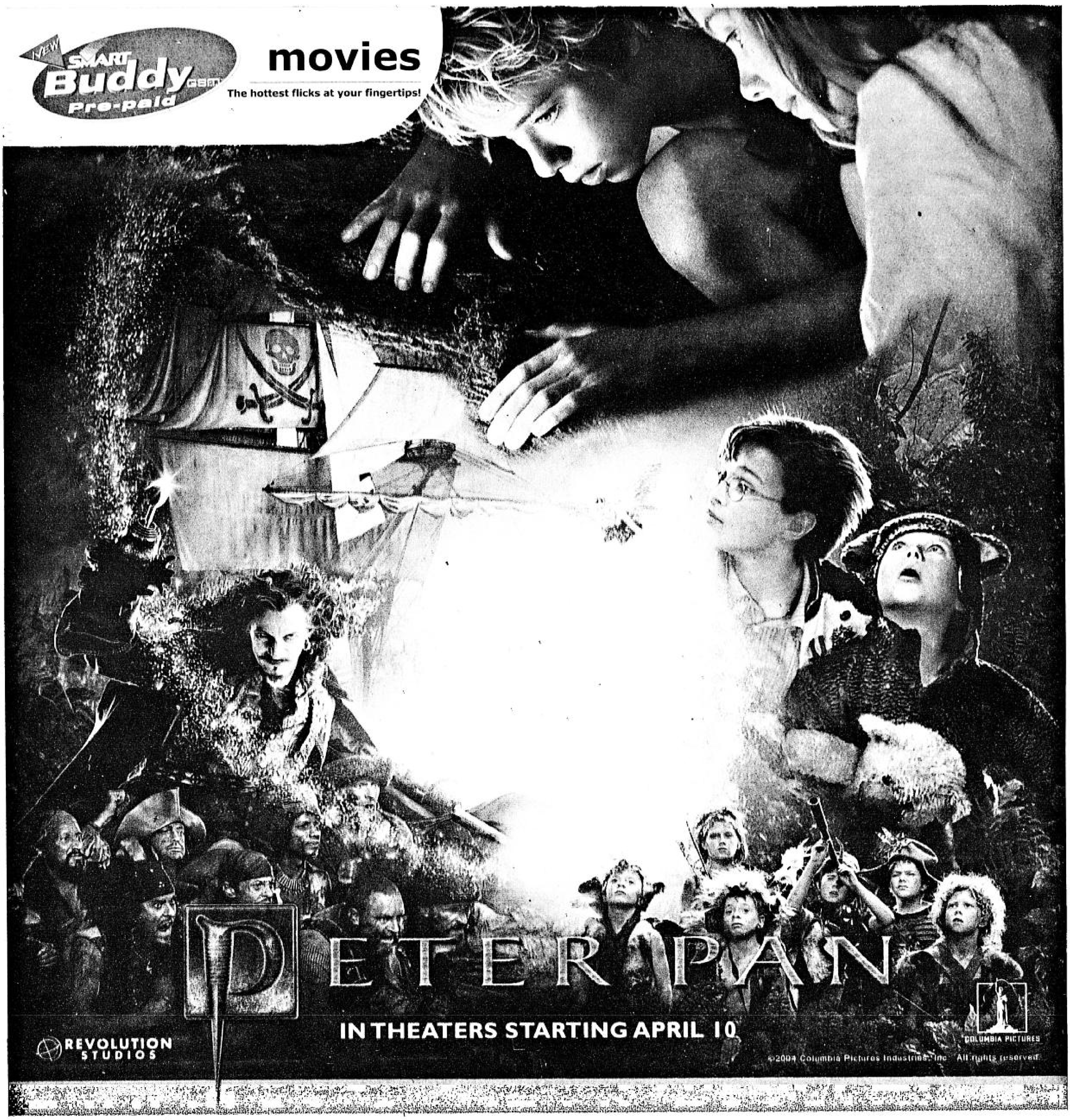
More movies on pages C2 and C3.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PETER PAN
IN THEATERS STARTING APRIL 10
REVOLUTION STUDIOS
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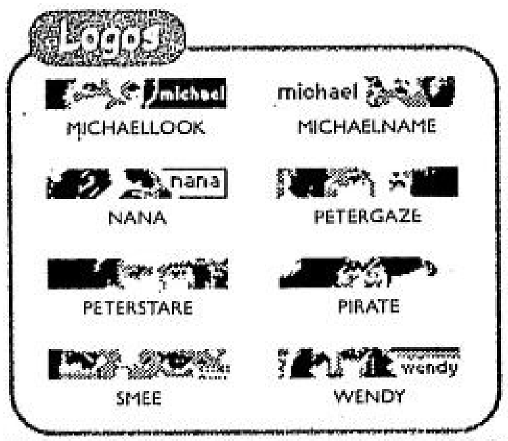
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PIRATE
SMEE
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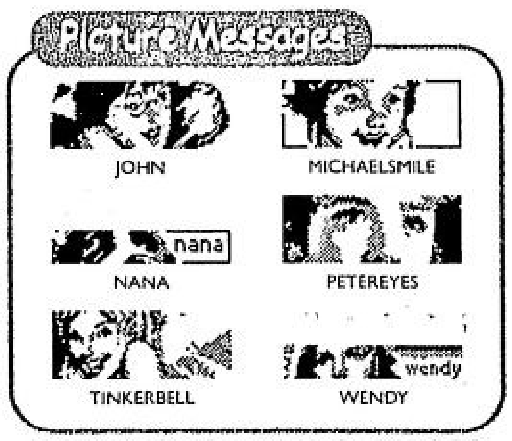
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NANA
PETEREYES
TINKERBELL
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WENDY

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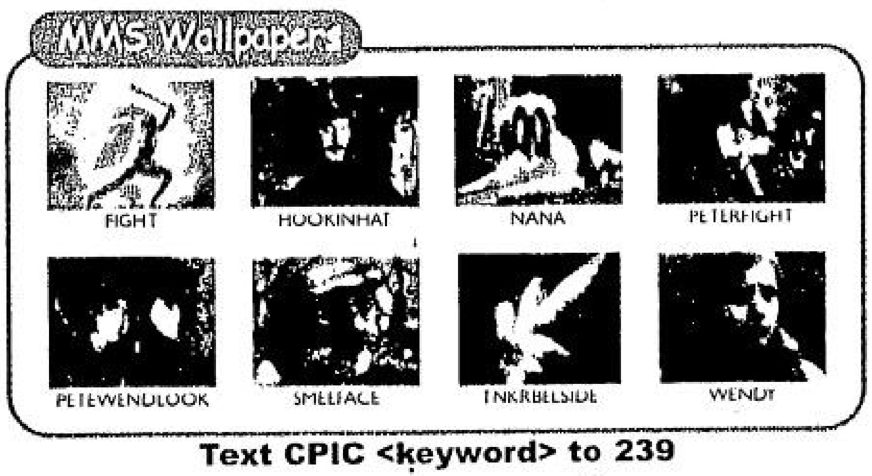
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BUSINESS

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Editor **Raul O. Marcelo**
Assistant Editor **Corrie S. Narisma**

Gas price hike seen this month

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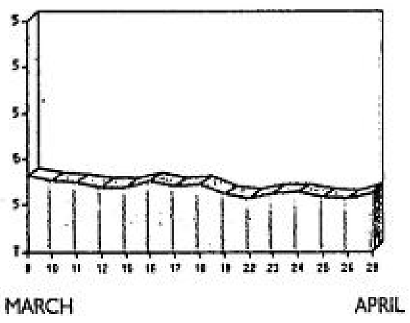

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 56.175= $1

As of 5 p.m., April 1, 2004

¥ 104.13 = $1

As of 5 p.m., April 1, 2004

GOLD: $423.5-424.0

per ounce Hong Kong, April 1, 2004

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE DEPARTMENT of Energy has warned the National Price Coordinating Council that fuel prices are likely go up again within the month after world prices, particularly of gasoline, surged anew in March.

Trade Undersecretary Adrian Cristobal Jr. said that energy officials briefed an inter-agency meeting yesterday on the expected increase in gasoline prices this month.

The price council monitors basic commodity prices and aims to prevent price spikes caused by factors such as the peso depreciation, fuel increase, transport fare and wage adjustments.

Businessman Raul Concepcion estimated that the pump price of gasoline would go up by another 60 centavos in April. But diesel prices should remain unchanged as world diesel prices were flat.

Last month, oil firms raised gasoline prices by 60 centavos per liter and kerosene by 40 centavos a liter.

"The DOE presented a report to the price council during the meeting. They said that they expect a slight increase in the price of gasoline this month," Cristobal said in a press conference yesterday.

He said oil players have assured the price council that the P2-per-liter discount on diesel being offered for public transport groups would be maintained. Diesel currently sells at about P17.80 a liter while gasoline is at P23.10 a liter.

Concepcion, who heads the Consumer Oil Price Watch, said that prices of gasoline in the world market had gone up by about $4 a barrel.

He added that there were indications that the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries would further cut production by about a million barrels starting this month.

The businessman added that an increase in gasoline prices should not affect the general public unlike diesel, which fuels most public transport.

Oil companies said that the regional month-to-date average price

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BUSINESS

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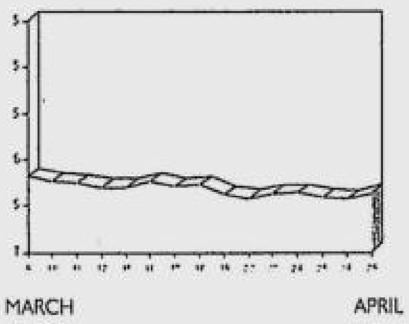

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Stocks up for 3rd straight session

STOCKS closed higher for a third straight session yesterday on bargain hunting in select blue chips, led by dominant phone firm PLDT and second-ranked Globe Telecom.

The main index added 8.78 points, or 0.62 percent, to 1,433.11 points, boosted by a 2.63-percent jump in Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT).

Globe Telecom, jointly owned by conglomerate Ayala Corp. and Singapore Telecommunications, rose 1.22 percent, or P10, to P830.

"The rise could be due to seasonal window-dressing activities of portfolio managers," said RCBC Securities stocks analyst Edwin Mendoza.

"Once their activities are over, the market may revert to its sideways direction." The main index is still down 0.64 percent so far this year.

Analysts said the arrest of two more members of an Islamic militant cell, which the government said was planning bomb attacks on shops and trains in Manila, had eased security fears.

Mendoza said uncertainties over who would win the May 10 election and worries over the economy would keep investors from investing further in stocks.

The IMF said on Wednesday it was growing more concerned about the Philippines' high public deficit and debt levels, saying there was an urgent need for the government to implement economic reforms.

"These problems need to be addressed before the economy can be steered toward a sustainable growth path," Mendoza said.

"Faced with these uncertainties, we expect the market to falter anew before moving higher."

Value turnover dropped to P498.28 million from Wednesday's P1.24 billion. Gainers beat losers 26 to 23 and there were 37 stocks unchanged.

Pilipino Telephone Corp. (Piltel), the country's third-largest mobile phone firm and 45-percent owned by PLDT, finished 1.16 percent or two centavos higher at P1.74. *Reuters*

PRULINK	PRU LIFE U.K.	
Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Current Week March 30, 2004	Last Week March 23, 2004
Bond Fund - Peso	1.10903	1.10424
Managed Fund - Peso	1.14655	1.14584
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.0160	1.0124

* Note: These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission

SMC reports brisk sales

Elizabeth L. Sanchez

FOOD and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. (SMC) said its operating income as of February grew 29 percent to P1.35 billion due to brisk volumes.

The company said sales revenue hit more than P6 billion as of February this year, boosted by a 30-percent growth in beer sales.

In a disclosure to the stock exchange, SMC said beer sales volumes stood at 30 million cases from January to February.

The beer giant said growth was traced to robust demand from Visayas and Mindanao.

SMC said this was ahead of its targets since volume tended to weaken after the holiday season. It added that volumes normally tend to slacken during the first and third quarters but the recent trend seemed positive.

SMC also said it expected beer volumes to increase at a "double-digit" pace for the first quarter due to "favorable sales trending."

SMC earlier said net earnings as of the first two months hit P1 billion against the previous year's P918 million. Consolidated net sales revenues for that period reached P24.4 billion or higher by 14 percent over last year.

SEC orders firm to stop selling shares

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission (SEC) has cited lending firm Citicapital Inc. for violations of securities laws and ordered it to stop offering or selling securities until its registration statements have been approved.

In a resolution, SEC ordered Citicapital, its officers, directors, agents and representatives to "immediately cease and desist under pain of contempt from further offering, soliciting or otherwise selling securities to the public" until its required registration statement is filed and approved by the SEC and a corresponding permit to offer or sell securities has been issued.

The SEC also ordered Citicapital to show cause within five days why its cease-and-desist order should not be made permanent.

The agency said Citicapital filed a registration statement with its corporation finance department in November 2002. Pending the approval of the registration statement, the SEC learned that Citicapital sold its preferred shares to five majority stockholders, each with 11,500 shares.

Gas . . .

From page B1

of gasoline in March was almost $4.50 a barrel higher than the February average.

The energy department said that Dubai crude hit $31.90 a barrel last March 24, the highest level since the US-Iraq war crisis. At the height of the US-led war against Iraq, Dubai crude peaked at $31.18 a barrel.

Average-to-date price of Dubai crude is now at $30.91 a barrel, or $2.30 higher than the $28.61 average in February. Regional prices of unleaded gasoline have been steadily increasing, averaging at $44.23 a barrel in March from $39.87 in February.

UNIONBANK
OF THE PHILIPPINES
NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS

March 31, 2004

For All Stockholders,

Please be advised that the Annual Meeting of Stockholders of Union Bank of the Philippines ("UnionBank") will be at the Manila A & B Ballroom of Makati Shangri-la, Makati Avenue, Makati City on Friday, May 28, 2004 at 2:00 p.m.

The Agenda for the said meeting will be as follows:

I. Calling the Roll
II. Proof of Notice of Meeting
III. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Stockholders' Meeting held on May 23, 2003
IV. Chairman/CEO's Report to Stockholders - Mr. Justo A. Ortiz
V. Annual Report of Management on Operations for 2003 - President , Victor B. Valdepeñas
VI. Appointment of External Auditor
VII. Amendment of UnionBank By-Laws to include as additional provisions of *Article V Sections 11 to 14* re: (1) Creation of Nomination Committee & its Functions & *Section 15* (2) Election of Independent Directors
VIII. Election of Directors for 2004 - 2005 term
IX. Adjournment

Only stockholders of record as of **April 16, 2004** will be entitled to attend and participate at the above meeting.

Registration starts at 1:00 p.m. In the event you are unable to attend and in order to assure the presence of a quorum at the annual meeting, please accomplish the Proxy Form sent to you and return it to the undersigned at Union Bank of the Philippines, 5th Floor SSS(Makati) Building, Ayala Avenue cor. V.A. Rufino Street, Makati City, not later than May 18, 2004 for the validation of Proxies entitled to vote. The giving of the proxy will not affect your right to vote in the event you personally attend the meeting. The books of the Corporation will be closed from May 7, 2004 to May 27, 2004 in order to give the Stock and Transfer Agent time to determine and complete the list of stockholders entitled to attend the said meeting.

Very truly yours,

(Sgd.) ATTY. FE B. MACALINO
Corporate Secretary

Sobra na ang mga katiwalian!
Sobra na ang Pang-aapi!
Sobra na ang pahirap sa ating bayan!
Kaya, kailangan namin ang tulong ng bawat isa sa inyo upang makamit ang aking minimithing pangarap.
Pangarap na magbibigay ng magandang kinabukasan, bagong umaga, sa bawat tao saan mang sulok ng ating bansa.
Sama-sama tayo.. Tulong-tulong tayo...
Help me dream, LET ME DREAM PH-ilippines!
Handog namin para sa iyo Filipino!
FPJ
for President
LOREN
for Vice-President
for SENATORS
LIM
ENRILE
TATAD
MACEDA
ESTRADA
DILANGALEN
RASUL
ESCUDERO
ANSON ROA
MADRIGAL
PIMENTEL
HERRERA
KOALISYON ng NAGKAKAISANG PILIPINO

THIS POLITICAL AD IS PAID BY JEAN ESPINA

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of April 1, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.25	17.25	17	17.25	23,500
Bank of the Phil. Islands	44	44.5	44	44.5	233,500
Equitable Pci Bank Inc.	38	38	38	38	173,500
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.53	0.53	270,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	23.5	24	23.5	23.75	156,000
Philippine National Bank	23	23	23	23	700
Phil. Savings Bank	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	6,100
Union Bank of the Phil.	23.5	23.5	23.5	23.5	700
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1	1	1	1	10,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	2050	2050	2050	2050	630
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	500,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	140	140	135	135	1,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1485	1485	1485	1485	290
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	20	20	19.75	20	14,600
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	20,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	815	830	815	830	52,700
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.038	0.038	0.038	0.038	200,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.037	0.037	0.037	0.037	200,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	20,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	1.74	1.74	1.72	1.74	8,324,000
Transpacific Broadcast	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	20,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	960	975	960	975	241,550
Ivantage Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	10,000
Philweb Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.013	136,800,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	16.75	17	16.75	17	69,800
Manila Electric Co. B	24.5	24.75	24.25	24.5	2,245,000
Petron Corp.	2.7	2.75	2.65	2.75	1,739,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.95	1	0.95	1	17,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.9	2.95	2.9	2.95	289,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	50,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	30,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	110,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	20,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	542,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	4	4	4	4	1,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	28	28	28	28	8,100
Jollibee Foods Corp.	17	17	17	17	682,000
RFM Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	80,000
San Miguel Corp. A	56.5	56.5	56.5	56.5	26,900
San Miguel Corp. B	70	70	70	70	13,300
Universal Robina Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	66,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	4,570,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	6	6.1	6	6.1	324,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.85	2.85	2.85	2.85	550,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	500,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1	1	1	1	60,000
APC Group Inc.	0.0625	0.0625	0.0625	0.0625	100,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.48	1.48	50,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.49	0.49	1,350,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.02	0.022	0.02	0.022	1,300,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	100,900
Ionics Inc.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	20,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.76	1.8	1.76	1.8	17,000
Megaworld Corp.	1	1	1	1	1,370,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	1,940,000
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	22,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	1,500
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	8.3	8.5	8.3	8.5	68,000
Pryce Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	560,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.55	0.56	0.51	0.51	3,400,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	200,000
Manila Jockey Club	7	7	7	7	1,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	100,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	19.75	20	19.75	19.75	1,327,700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series L	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series O	10.5	10.5	10.5	.10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series R	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6	6	6	6	8,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.2	5.3	5.2	5.2	3,347,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	500,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.19	0.2	0.19	0.2	160,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1	1	1	1	1,360,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.175	0.175	0.15	0.17	62,520,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	30,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	228,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6	6	6.9	5.9	5,228,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	101,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.21	0.225	0.21	0.22	7,310,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	3,200,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	3,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	23,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.37	0.38	0.37	0.37	3,500,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	370,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	4,000,000

DISCLOSURES

SOUTHEAST Asia Cement Holdings Inc. moved its annual stockholders' meeting from June 30 to July 5 at 9 a.m. with stockholders of record as of June 15 entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. announced the resignation of Federico Garcia as director of the company.

* * *

LIBERTY Flour Mills Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 26, 3 p.m. at the Liberty Building, Arnaiz Ave., Makati City. Stockholders of record as of April 30 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

UNION Bank of the Philippines will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 28, 2 p.m. at the Manila A & B Ballroom of Makati Shangri-La Hotel. Record date is on April 16.

* * *

SM Prime Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 22, 3 p.m. at the Rizal Ballrooms B & C of Makati Shangri-La Hotel. Only stockholders of record as of March 23 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

KEPPEL Philippines Properties Inc. disclosed the re-designation of Sin Wai Meng as senior vice president of the company. Also, record date for its June 10 annual stockholders' meeting is on May 14.

* * *

ASIA Terminals Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 29, 2 p.m. at the Diamond Ballroom of Manila Diamond Hotel. Only stockholders of record as of March 30 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

BOGO-Medellin Milling Company Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 28, 10 a.m. at Barangay Luy-a, Medellin, Cebu. Stockholders of record as of April 5 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

April 1, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.812084	1.000000	56.2160
Japan	Yen	0.007788	0.009590	0.5391
United Kingdom	Pound	1.499025	1.845900	103.7691
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.104219	0.128335	7.2145
Switzerland	Franc	0.641659	0.790139	44.4185
Canada	Dollar	0.619911	0.763359	42.9130
Singapore	Dollar	0.485174	0.597443	33.5859
Australia	Dollar	0.619391	0.762718	42.8770
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.154240	2.652731	149.1259
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.216573	0.266688	14.9921
Brunei	Dollar	0.483729	0.595664	33.4858
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000095	0.000117	0.0066
Thailand	Baht	0.020706	0.025497	1.4333
UAE	Dirham	0.221120	0.272287	15.3069
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.231400	69.2244
Argentina	Peso	0.284443	0.350263	19.6904
Brazil	Real	0.279354	0.343997	19.3381
Denmark	Kroner	0.134309	0.165388	9.2975
India	Rupee	0.018755	0.023095	1.2983
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.213735	0.263193	14.7957
Mexico	New Peso	0.073029	0.089928	5.0554
New Zealand	Dollar	0.540273	0.665292	37.4001
Norway	Kroner	0.118630	0.146081	8.2121
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014222	0.017513	0.9845
South Africa	Rand	0.129004	0.158856	8.9302
Korea	Won	0.000708	0.000872	0.0490
Sweden	Kroner	0.107724	0.132651	7.4571
Syria	Pound	0.018406	0.022665	1.2741
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024683	0.030395	1.7087
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000424	0.000522	0.0293

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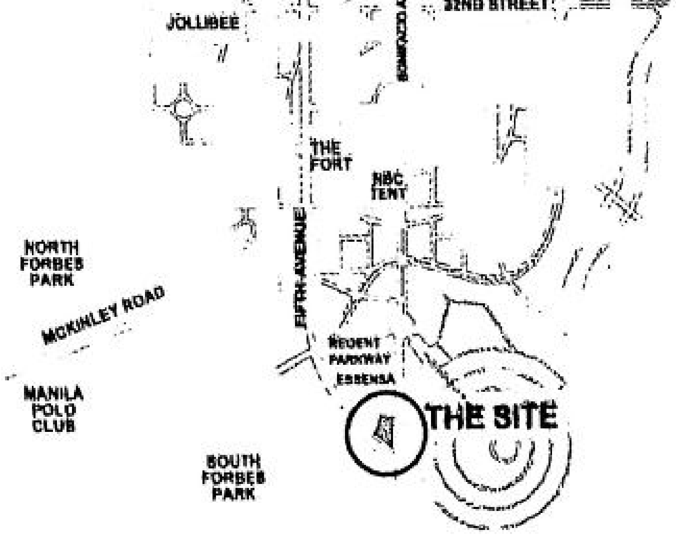
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DTI: Fare hike won't impact on prices

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE HIKE in public transport fare would not affect the prices of basic commodities unless a corresponding wage hike would be approved, the Department of Trade and Industry yesterday assured the public.

According to Trade Secretary Cesar Purisima, the prices of most basic commodities, especially milk and cooking oil, had already increased even before the transport hike yesterday went into effect.

Jeepney fare for the first 5 kilometers went up by 75 centavos in Metro Manila, and 50 centavos in the provinces.

Purisima during an interview said that transport fare normally accounted for "a negligible portion of production costs."

He added that manufacturers have excess inventory in the next 45 days that were not covered by the fare adjustment. He said traders and manufacturers have no reason to mark up their prices.

Trade Undersecretary Adrian Cristobal Jr., who yesterday convened the National Price Coordinating Council, warned unscrupulous retailers that the DTI would not hesitate to slap sanctions on those violating the Price Act, the Price Tag Law and the Consumer Act.

"Retailers should not use the fare adjustment as an excuse to increase prices because the fare hike does not have much impact," said the trade undersecretary.

Raul Concepcion said that price monitoring after the Holy Week would reflect whether traders took advantage of the fare hike to jack up prices.

Cristobal said that based on DTI's price monitoring, costs of several commodities have increased in the last week of March. Notable are the increases in prices of flour, milk products, cooking oil and even coffee.

Hard flour now costs P525 per kilo, up from P510 per kilo last week. The price of flour surged in the world market.

Cristobal said powdered milk, based on the latest DTI survey, costs P3 more, coffee is about P1.25 higher, and cooking oil is up by a peso from their price level in February.

Cristobal added that according to the DTI's latest price monitoring report, ordinary rice still stands at P19 per kilo, while refined and brown sugar stands at P26 and P22 per kilo, respectively. Prices of a number of brands of vinegar and toilet soap even went down.

"We are not overly concerned with the fare hike especially on the short term because of the excess inventory. What could be worrisome is, if there would be a wage hike and to what extent," said the trade chief.

Cristobal said the government welcomed calls of the moderate Trade Union Congress of the Philippines for labor groups not to seek a wage hike. TUCP, however, sought a strict monitoring of prices to minimize the impact of the fare adjustment on the public.

According to the labor department, there is no pending petition for a wage hike in the National Capital Region, although labor groups have been pressing for a P125 per day increase in wages across-the-board on the current minimum daily wage of P233 in the NCR and P234 on the average nationwide.

The government had not adjusted wages in the last three years.

"Our estimate is that for every peso fare hike, inflation would increase by 50 basis points," said Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri. "So the 75 centavos would have an impact of about 35 basis points to inflation."

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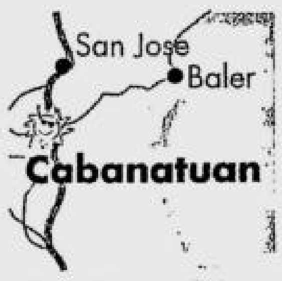

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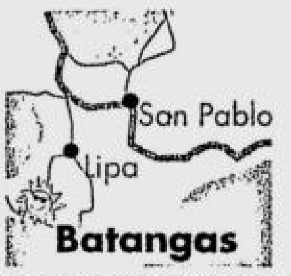
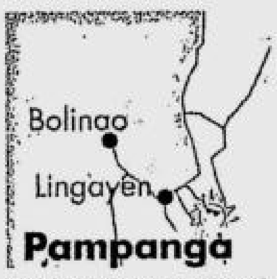


National Highway, Sto.Tomas
De la Salle, Lipa,
National Highway, Nasugbu, Batangas



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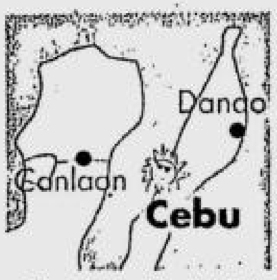
San Fernando, Pampanga

Trece Martires
Tagaytay
Tall Lake
Aguinaldo Highway,
Tagaytay City, Cavite



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A hard life for small fisherfolk

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

THE POOREST people in the Philippines are the fisherfolk in our coastal towns. To get a glimpse of this poverty, one need not go far. On the Coastal Road in Parañaque is "Bulungan," a wholesale fish trading place similar to Navotas. Here, where the "bulungan" (whispering) system of trading takes place, you will encounter the small fishermen who come in with their catch from Manila Bay to tell you about their lives. Last March 23, I did exactly that.

COMMENTARY

Ka Joe de la Cruz had just come in from the sea. He left for work the previous night at 11 p.m. He was with Ka Erning Abad, who unloaded two bags from their small banca (fishing boat). One bag contained two fish and a few undersized crabs (*alimasag*). The second bag contained five kilos of such crabs.

The night's catch yielded P80 for the first bag and P300 for the second.

Income allocation

When I asked Ka Joe how he felt about his night's work, he said that he wished his children would not go through the same experiences when they grow up. The money he earned was not commensurate to the dangerous work.

Ka Joe explained that, of the P380 he received that morning, one third (P130) would pay for the banca rental. One fifth (P76) would go to Ka Ernie. About P50 was allotted for the gasoline. This would leave him with only P124 for the day's work.

This is less than half the minimum daily wage of a factory worker in Metro Manila. But such jobs are simply not available for him. Ka Erning's income was much worse: the P76 he earned would not be enough to pay for a two-piece chicken value meal at a fast-food chain.

"The main reason we earn so little and are mired in poverty is pollution," Ka Joe said. "The water is often reddish. This indicates that industrial waste from factories along the Pasig River had been dumped into the water. This results in very little sea life in Manila Bay."

Ka Joe recalled that when he was a boy, there was little pollution. His father, also a fisherman, would come home with fish catch as much as five times what Joe gets today.

"When my children grow up," Joe said, "the pollution will be much worse if the government continues to do little about it. That is why I work so hard to earn the income needed to pay for the education of my children. My fear is that ... they may not be able to get other jobs. Something is wrong with our country. I am losing hope. There is nothing else I can do."

Difficulties encountered

To earn his meager income, Ka Joe has to spend much time on the seabed ten fathoms (or 60 feet) deep. There he catches fish and crabs to sell the following morning. He breathes through a long plastic tube connected to a second-hand air conditioner compressor which he bought for P1,200. During his long stay underwater, he sometimes takes in gasoline instead of oxygen because of the faulty compressor.

Occasionally, when he surfaces to rest, he sees other fishermen using dynamite to catch fish. This method further limits Ka Joe's potential to catch fish. When the dynamite fishermen are spotted by Coast Guard patrol boats, they often escape by just speeding away. This is because the patrol boats are simply too slow to catch them.

Ka Joe cites pollution as the main culprit for his poverty today. He has not heard of anyone being jailed during the past years for polluting the waters—a problem that has grown to serious proportions.

Some measure should be undertaken. Inspections should be conducted on the equipment, particularly on the air conditioner compressors used by small fishermen like Ka Joe. According to Ka Pacio Federizo of the Kilusang Mangingisda, such occupational safety and health measures are quite simple to do but are not being done today.

Faster boats to catch dynamite fishermen should also be given to the Coast Guard. But if budget constraints would not allow this, Ka Pacio said that the mere provision of basic communications equipment in the coastal municipalities would do much to fight dynamite fishing.

Ka Joe's future

For Ka Joe, life looks bleak. He had previously worked in Saudi Arabia for two years, and had recently tried to go back to earn a better income. But that avenue of escape for him has closed. He failed the health requirement when a black spot was found in his lungs—possibly indicating tuberculosis.

He does not know how much time he has left before he gets other health problems like embolism, which is often the result of prolonged stay underwater.

Ka Joe hopes that the elections would bring in a government that has the political will to punish the factories causing the pollution.

When we ended our conversation that Tuesday morning, he said that he hoped people who are more fortunate would speak to fishermen and understand their plight. Ka Joe also hopes that they will join him in convincing government to take the necessary steps to secure a better future for small fisherfolk.

(The author is chair of Agriwatch, a private sector initiative; former undersecretary of Agriculture and Trade and Industry; and former chair and Cabinet secretary for Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects. For inquiries or suggestions, e-mail agriwatchphil@yahoo.com or telefax 02-8516635.)

Price retreat

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

PRICESMART, the first foreign merchandiser to enter the country under the Retail Trade Liberalization Act, is scaling back operations and even considering, horror of horrors, pulling out of the country.

According to the grapevine, PriceSmart local partner William Go is in the midst of negotiations with his San Diego (California)-based principal to acquire the Alabang branch at the very least or take over the entire Philippine operations himself.

Go reportedly has an idea different from that of his American partner as to the merchandising and sourcing mix of the warehouse chain.

PriceSmart has three stores. Its fourth, in the Parañaque reclaimed area, is now planning to open in June, from the original November 2003 launch date.

Like the bigger competition from the Dutch-controlled Makro, whose local partners SM and Ayala groups have announced plans to divest from the venture, PriceSmart has been dodged by cutthroat competition and a weakening peso.

Despite serious cost-cutting efforts, PriceSmart Philippine operations have posted losses—Philippine results are not disclosed but worldwide PriceSmart reported a $24.3-million net loss for fiscal 2003—forcing it to close the Ortigas branch and cancel its plan to expand in Cebu.

Last December, PriceSmart also shut down its lone Guam store, which is administered out of Manila.

The weakening peso has also made it more difficult to maintain the dollar-denominated salary of its expatriate country manager, whose perks include a full-service house in Forbes, a driver-driven Ford Expedition and full-time armed bodyguards.

Bimmer beeper

THOSE who aspire for BMW but have shallow pockets may finally have a lineup within their reach.

BMW Philippines is planning to bring the entry-level 1-Series by the third quarter, almost simultaneous with its European launching.

Prices should be, according to the grapevine, in the Honda Accord- and Toyota Camry-range. Targeted to be a volume seller, the 1-Series should even be made affordable with BMW's aggressive financing scheme.

Based on the initial press preview, the rear-wheel drive 1-Series will be 24 centimeters shorter than a 3-Series saloon but, thanks to neat engineering tricks, will have more leg and shoulder room, especially with its hatchback iteration.

Two of the five variants are equipped with diesel engines, which should make daily operating costs easier on the wallet.

Incidentally, those who wish to get their hands on the hot-selling Mini will either have to source the pocket rocket from the gray market, import it directly from overseas, or enter and win the Gilbey's Gin and Addict contests.

The word is that Mini is requiring a separate showroom and a minimum guaranteed sales of 200 units a year before agreeing to open a dealership in the country, a rather tall order considering the sluggish state of the Philippine market.

Myopic vision

THE SUPREME Court last week allowed the Board of Optometry to proceed hearing the disbarment case filed by the Samahan ng mga Optometrists sa Pilipinas against fellow optometrists employed by the Vision Express chain.

The industry group claimed, in a case filed way back in December 1994 with the Philippine Regulatory Commission, that local regulations disallow optometrists from practicing under a corporate name.

Despite the industry's protectionist moves, Vision Express, an American chain, has successfully penetrated the local market with its aggressive pricing and one-hour service.

Heard through the grapevine

AMBASSADOR to the United Kingdom Edgardo Espiritu is back in Manila and the latest word is that the former Erap finance secretary has changed his mind, amid strong resistance from the staff, about selling the San Francisco-based Philippine News to Manila Times publisher Dante Ang.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com. Cocktales will take a Holy Week break and will be back on April 12.)

2 power plants seen ready by 2008

By Abigail L. Ho

LUZON and Visayas will soon get two new power plants with capacities ranging from 200 megawatts (MW) to 450 MW as two groups have agreed to infuse much-needed capital to help avert a looming power crisis in those areas.

In a presentation at the Asian Institute of Management yesterday, Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. said that a consortium composed of several firms would be putting up a 250-MW to 400-MW baseload power plant somewhere in Luzon.

Funding for the new plant, with a target commissioning of January 2008, would come from equity (70 percent) and from a foreign export credit bank (30 percent).

As a rule of thumb in the power industry, the cost of building a power plant is pegged at $1 million for every MW of capacity. Using this standard, the Luzon plant will cost between $250 million and $400 million.

Perez said the consortium was now in the process of signing up bilateral contracts with large power users in the area to ensure that it would have a customer base upon commissioning.

However, he declined to name which firms were part of the consortium.

For the 200-MW Visayas plant, an industry source said that Kepco Philippines Corp., a subsidiary of Korea Electric Power Co., will be undertaking the project.

According to Perez's presentation, the plant would be funded by the project proponent's internally generated cash.

He said the plant would be a merchant plant, which means it would not be bound by any power supply contracts and would be purely reliant on market demand.

Target commissioning of the Visayas plant is pegged at May 2008.

A new plant in Mindanao, the Mindanao coal power project, is also being readied and is set to go commercial by 2006.

Building the 200-MW coal-fired power plant in Misamis Oriental is the State Power Development Corp.

These new plants are expected to avert a looming power crisis in the country's three largest island groups.

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HSBC, Yahoo launch mobile service tie-up

By Doris C. Dumlao

HSBC Ltd. has tied up with Yahoo!Southeast Asia to launch a mobile Internet portal for its credit card business in the Philippines, marking the debut of the British bank's new service prior to its global rollout.

In a press briefing yesterday, HSBC senior vice president James Benoit said the bank chose the Philippines as the inaugural market for this service given the phenomenal growth of mobile phone usage in the country.

"The Philippines, in many ways, is a leading market for using the cell phone not just as a cell phone," Benoit said.

After the Philippines, the new service is expected to be launched next in Indonesia, which is likewise seen as a big market for wireless phone usage.

The tie-up allows HSBC's credit card users to access the latest information of merchant offers and promotions on a specially designed mobile Internet portal (www.mobile.hsbc.com.ph) over mobile Internet phones.

Benoit said the bank was likewise working on other banking transactions which could be introduced using this portal.

e-Banking plays a significant role in HSBC, which has an existing facility for SMS (short messaging system) or text-based services, Internet banking as well as automated phone banking.

Benoit said the launch of this new service would strengthen customer loyalty in HSBC's credit cards.

"HSBC and Yahoo! are leading the way to shape the future of consumer banking by going paperless and wireless. Yahoo! built the end-to-end wireless solution that enables HSBC to deliver real-time information to its customers in a more interactive and dynamic manner, a giant leap away from the conventional paper-based mailers," HSBC eBusiness head Oliver Jones said.

Solar Entertainment signs film distribution deal

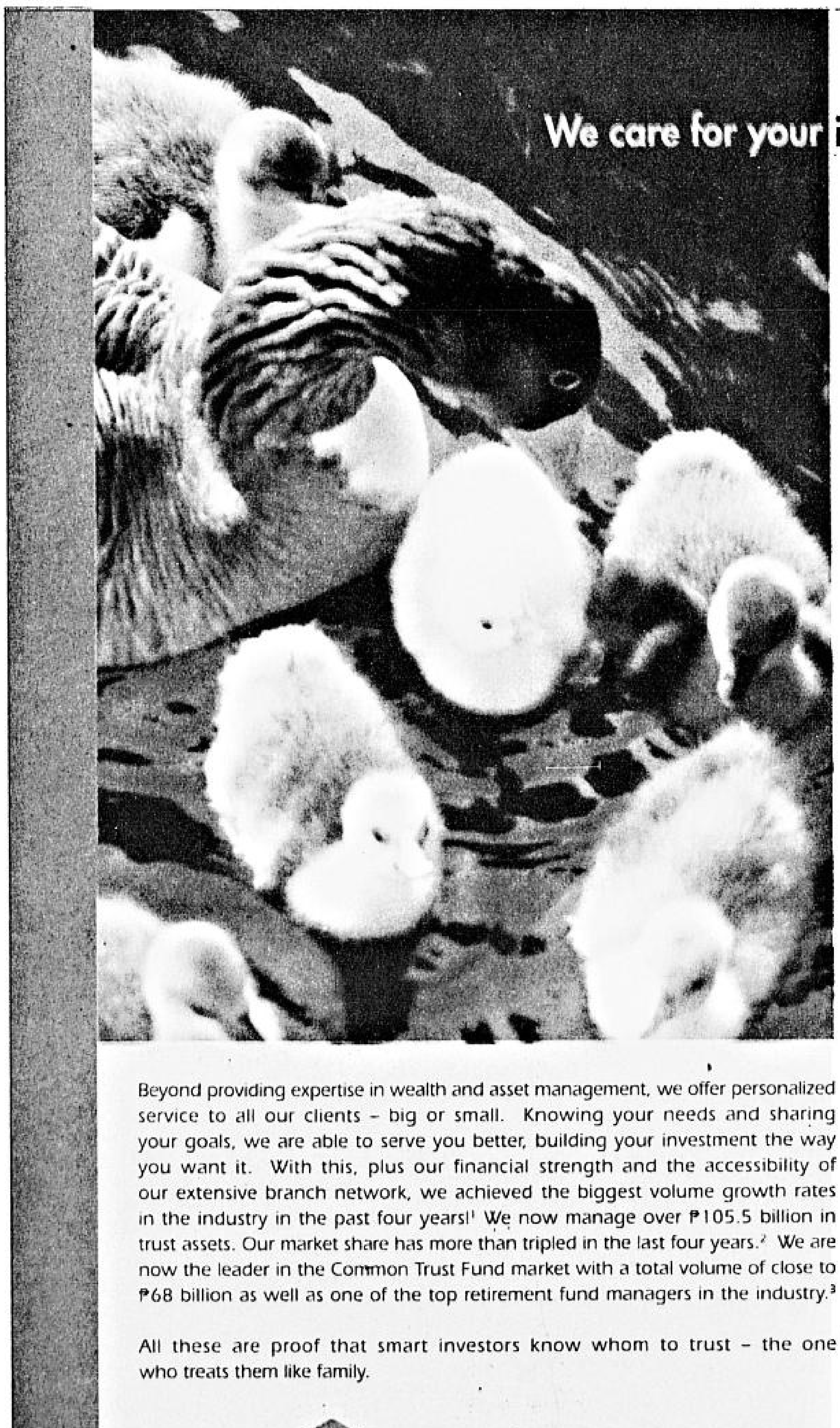
SOLAR Entertainment Corp. have signed a film distribution license agreement with United International Pictures BV (UIP) wherein the local firm will distribute UIP films for theatrical release in the Philippines, starting with the popular Shrek 2 on May 21.

"We are delighted to have chosen Solar Entertainment as our distributor in the Philippines," said Kurt Rieder, UIP vice president for sales and marketing in Asia. "Their considerable experience in theatrical distribution, coupled with their impressive media assets, makes them the perfect partner for UIP." UIP is represented in the Philippines by Selina Gecolea de Venecia.

"We are gratified to have the opportunity to afford our Filipino movie-goers with the impressive lineup of offerings available from United International Pictures," said Solar president Wilson Y. Tieng. Tieng also announced the appointment of Lucas Pasiliao as executive vice president and COO for Solar's theatrical and home video division.

Tieng said Solar's accord with UIP marked the common resolve of both companies to more effectively serve the Philippine market: "It is Solar's objective to widen the array of quality entertainment opportunities for all Filipinos, and our partnership with UIP is a crucial step in this effort."

UIP is one of the world's leading film distribution companies, bringing Paramount, Universal and Dreamworks films to cinemas around the globe.



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[1] In terms of volume growth from 2001 to 2003
[2] Market share growth from 1999 to 2003
[3] Watson Wyatt survey for the past 3-year period (2000 to 2002) and the past 5-year period (1998 to 2003)

Trust placements are not covered by PDIC. Investor safeguards are covered by Monetary Board Regulation 1065 (BSP Regulations on Trust)

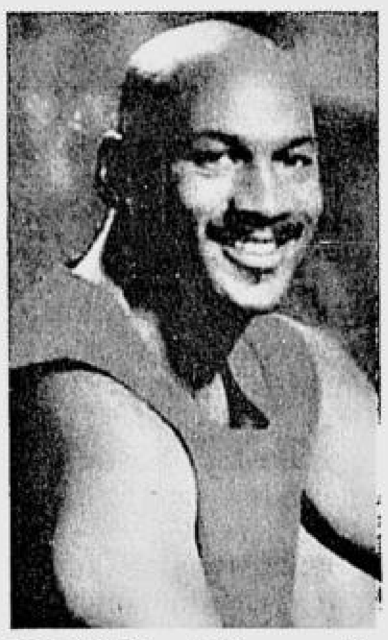
Upside of tapping celebrity endorsers

By Karen V. de Asis
Contributor

ACTRESS and singer Sharon Cuneta was reportedly paid P20 million by Unilab to endorse pH Care. It sent the brand's share skyrocketing from zero to 56 percent, cutting rival market share to less than half in six months.

This is no unique feat for Cuneta who has also been attributed with WG&A Superferry's market leadership doubling passenger volume in three months to eventually become the dominant shipping brand.

Same with Selecta's successful relaunch over 10 years ago where Cuneta with Aga Muhlach were shown sinfully enjoying the richness of Selecta ice cream, bringing life to the lackluster brand.



JORDAN: Turned Nike around in the '80s

Effective ways

Below are some effective ways of using the celebrity endorsement marketing strategy.

Use celebrity endorsements to sell low involvement products or services. Largely viewed as commodity items, these products have absolutely no differentiation in the minds of consumers. Relatively inexpensive, bought frequently as a matter of fact and day to day living rather than with resolve, and absolutely with no unique or compelling benefit, low endorsement products can capitalize on celebrity endorsements.

Use credible endorsers. To be effective, endorsers need to be seen as knowledgeable, skilled, experienced, believable and qualified to talk about the product or service they are endorsing. In 1984, despite a slipping performance due largely to Reebok's aggressive inroad in the men's sports shoe segment, Nike signed Michael Jordan to what was then a whopping $2.5-million contract, ridiculed by many financial analysts as unwise and ill-advised considering Nike's financial woes at the time. On Sept. 15, 1984, the first of the series of Air Jordan shoes was launched with an unprecedented two million pairs sold and a $55 million worth of backlog demand.

Locally, the phenomenal success and wide acceptance of the local brand ABS Bitter Herbs charagen ampalaya capsules and tea stems not merely from a clearly defined positioning that helps manage diabetes but likewise from expert, honest and credible endorsements by broadcast journalist, Mike Enriquez and music entertainers Gary Valenciano and Nonoy Zuñiga.

Capitalize on endorser's similarity with target market. Consumers are likely to be more influenced by endorsers who they feel are a lot like them. If the consumer perceives that he shares a similar lifestyle and interest as the endorser, then the message coming from the brand is likely to be more accepted. There is greater empathy between the brand, endorser and consumer. For example, American basketball star Dennis Rodman, while not very appealing to the general adult American population is much liked by kids in the Far East and Europe. In a publicized interview in 1998, the executive vice president of marketing of Converse remarked, "Rodman was huge in these markets—Dennis does what kids admire: he speaks his mind, stays true to himself, does not care what others think, is not artificial and does not suck up. We adults classify him as a rebel, but I do not think out of the 1,000 kids, you would ever hear one of them call him that."

Closely link endorser attractiveness and product message. Fashion, cosmetic, fitness and health brands benefit well from physically attractive endorsers. Nonetheless, marketers must ascertain that overshadowing is prevented and consumer attention goes beyond the model and well into the product message.

A study made by Reid and Soley reveals that when links are not executed well, attractive models merely facilitate attention but do not enhance copy or brand recall or readership of advertising message.

Despite using an overwhelmingly popular celebrity endorser Dao Min Sih to endorse the Bench apparel, there was equal consumer attention made to both the brand and endorser, perfectly aided by the copy statement, Dao shall wear Bench.

1973 Miss Universe Margie Moran-Floirendo's endorsement of C-Lium Fibre, enhances rather than distracts the consumer's understanding of the brand as a fibre supplement made from 100 percent psyllium husks that promote good digestion hence, preventing risks of obesity and high cholesterol. Consumers begin to understand with Moran's testimony how, despite a not so young age, she manages to stay physically attractive, healthy and fit with C-Lium fibre supplement.

Capitalize on endorser's likability. Endorsers can strongly influence consumer feelings and attitude. For example, Aga Muhlach has reportedly an unmatched positive appeal among kids.

FILIPINO marketers are not wanting of local celebrities like Leah Salonga.

Facilitate global brand recognition. Using a world renowned celebrity endorser can help bring awareness for new brands entering a foreign market. Celebrities likely to enhance global marketing campaigns are world-renowned film stars, athletes in world sports, television stars with internationally marketed programs and supermodels. Filipino global and regional marketers are not wanting of Filipino celebrities with Leah Salonga (music), Efren Bata Reyes (billiards), Paeng Nepomuceno (bowling), Manny Pacquiao (boxing), among others.

Managing risks

Despite the many upsides of using the celebrity endorsement strategy, marketers need to protect the brand from transgressions that may happen because of the use of an endorser i.e. bad publicity, misfit with the brand, ensuing controversies, etc. Among the safety nets include:

Celebrity life-screen. Marketers must do a meticulous screening of the celebrity endorser's past and present lifestyle and life experience. Endorsers have their own brand identity and through endorsements, the celebrity's meaning is transferred to the brand. Marketers must ensure that only meanings that are suitable to the brand are transferred.

Use morals clauses. A morals clause is a legal statement that allows the advertiser the option to terminate a contract with the celebrity where the latter pays or returns an equivalent partial or full amount of the talent fee in cases where there is a well-founded breach in contract.

Copy test. Marketing-oriented companies resort to copy testing to determine the celebrity's true appeal and fit to the brand as well as immediately detect any overshadowing that may happen in the advertising execution.

Using celebrities to endorse a brand is like making a capital investment. The decision must proceed with due diligence matched with careful planning and execution. *Feedbackat kdeasis@skyinet.net*

Tax assessment and collection

By Wilfredo U. Villanueva
and Rubina P. Bundoc-Aquino
SGV & CO

TAX-FILES

THE NATIONAL Internal Revenue Code of 1997 requires a taxpayer to keep his books of accounts, including the subsidiary books, for a period beginning from the last entry in each book until three years from the last day for the filing of the return.

Examination is done by Bureau of Internal Revenue officers. No proceeding in court without assessment for the collection of such taxes can begin after the expiration of such period. In case a return is filed beyond the period prescribed by law, the three-year period will be counted from the day the return was filed. A return filed before the last day prescribed by law will be considered as filed on such last day.

What happens if the BIR does not issue an assessment within the three-year period? Prescription would set in, which means that the BIR is barred from issuing any deficiency tax assessment against the taxpayer. However, there are exceptions to this three-year rule.

In the case of a false or fraudulent return with intent to evade tax or in the case of failure to file a return, the tax may be assessed, or a proceeding in court for the collection of such tax may be filed without assessment, at any time within 10 years after the discovery of the falsity, fraud or omission.

If, before the expiration of the time prescribed for the assessment of the tax, both the commissioner and the taxpayer have agreed in writing to its assessment after such time, the tax may be assessed within the period agreed upon. The agreed period may be extended by a written agreement made before the expiration of the period previously agreed upon.

What kind of written agreement is allowed? This agreement is what is more commonly referred to as the Waiver of the Statute of Limitations. The BIR issued Revenue Memorandum Order No. 20-90 , as amended by Revenue Delegation Authority Order (RDAO) No. 05-01, as a guide in the execution of the Waiver of the Statute of Limitations.

First, the waiver must be in the form specified in the rules and no deviation is allowed. The expiry date of the period agreed upon to assess / collect the tax after the regular three-year prescriptive period should be clearly indicated. Thus, the waiver may not be open-ended.

Second, the waiver will be signed by the taxpayer himself or his authorized representative. In corporations, the waiver must be signed by any of its officials. After the waiver is signed, the commissioner or the revenue official signs the waiver indicating that the BIR has accepted and agreed to the waiver. The date of such acceptance by the BIR should be indicated. It is important that both the date of execution by the taxpayer and date of acceptance by the BIR should be before the expiration of the previously agreed deadline.

Third, the waiver will be signed only by a duly designated revenue official. The RDAO enumerates the officials authorized to sign and accept the waiver.

In the national office, the following officials are authorized:

1. Assistant commissioner, enforcement service—For tax fraud and policy cases

2. ACIR, large taxpayers service—For large taxpayers cases other than those cases falling under the large taxpayers district office below

3. ACIR, legal service—For cases pending verification and awaiting resolution of certain legal issues prior to prescription and for issuance / compliance of subpoena duces tecum

4. ACIR, assessment service—For cases which are pending in or subject to review or approval by the ACIR, AS

5. ACIR, collection service—For cases pending action in the collection service

For cases in the large taxpayers district office, the chief of the LTDO shall sign and accept the waiver for cases pending investigation/action in his or her possession.

For regional cases, the following are authorized :

a. Revenue district officer "for cases pending investigation / verification / reinvestigation in the revenue district offices

b. Regional director—cases pending in the divisions in the regional office, including cases pending approval by the regional director

How long does the BIR have to validly enforce collection of the assessment?

As a general rule, the BIR has five years from the time an assessment for deficiency taxes is issued, within which it may collect deficiency taxes from a taxpayer.

In the event that an internal revenue tax has been assessed within the 10-year period to assess prescribed in the event of a false or fraudulent return, or in case of failure to file a return, the tax may be collected by distraint or levy or by a proceeding in court within five years following the assessment of the tax.

Likewise, any internal revenue tax which has been assessed within the period agreed upon in the Waiver of the Statute of Limitations, may be collected by distraint or levy or by a proceeding in court within the period agreed upon in writing before the expiration of the five-year period. The period so agreed upon may be extended by subsequent written agreements made before the expiration of the period previously agreed upon.

But are there circumstances that interrupt the running of the prescriptive period for assessment or collection?

The running of the Statute of Limitations for the issuance of an assessment and the initiation of distraint or levy or a proceeding in court for collection, with respect to any deficiency, will be suspended in the following cases:

(1) for the period during which the commissioner is prohibited from making the assessment or beginning distraint or levy or a proceeding in court and for 60 days thereafter;

(2) when the taxpayer protests the assessment and requests for its reinvestigation, which request is granted by the commissioner;

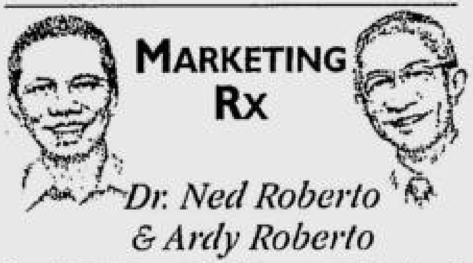
(3) when the taxpayer cannot be located in the address given by him in the return filed upon which a tax is being assessed or collected: Provided that, if the taxpayer informs the commissioner of any change in address, the running of the Statute of Limitations will not be suspended;

(4) when the warrant of distraint or levy is duly served upon the taxpayer, his authorized representative, or a member of his household with sufficient discretion, and no property could be located; and

(5) when the taxpayer is out of the Philippines.

So think twice before you start disposing those books of accounts.

When will Bro. Eddie's use of buzz marketing work?



MARKETING Rx

Dr. Ned Roberto & Ardy Roberto

THIS is the first big reality-based reason why Bro. Eddie's buzz marketing is slow in working out its "wonders." The 7-7 strategy (each voter of Bro. Eddie will recruit seven voters) may not be as focused on this p/p (probable/possible) voter segment as it should be. The natural tendency is to recruit and convert "friends and relatives." The likelihood of these recruits being already pro-Bro. Eddie is high. It's therefore a case of trying to convert the converted and to the extent that this is true, that's the extent to which the multiplier "7" is correspondingly reduced to as much as half or even less.

It's also likely that out of the one, two or three of the seven targeted converts that a Bro. Eddie disciple had convinced, these did not actually move themselves to replicate the recruitment of their own seven. So the multiplier effect stopped with the first tier of seven.

So here are those "failure traps" into which the Bro. Eddie 7-7 strategy may have fallen into. This is not to say that the strategy is flawed. It's a good strategy and buzz marketing has enough accumulated successful cases to support this conclusion. So it's certainly not a case of a strategy that's just good in theory but not in practice. The successes of buzz marketing count as a confirmation of what the scientist Kurt Lewin observed: "Nothing is more practical than a good theory."

What our diagnosis shows is that it's the implementation of the strategy that's flawed. Remember what management practitioners say about success: "Success comes from 10 percent good planning and 90 percent focused stick-to-it implementation."

Recall as well what we said about buzz marketing in our column last Oct. 31, 2003. As a marketing communication tool, buzz marketing generates conversation and word-of-mouth playbacks, repetitions, and embellished paraphrasing after your target advertising audience has seen, heard or read your communication. It is the message multiplier that is the real source of mass media's effectiveness. It's useful to distinguish between buzz generating messages and buzz communication media.

Buzz generating messages are varied and include use of true value-centered stories underlying your advertised product (as in the case of McDonald's "Lolo and Gina" story), and even the use of "value words" (like the "Walang iwanan" tagline of the ERAP camp during the last senatorial election), "attitude words" (like Nike's "Just Do It" or Sprite's "Obey Your Thirst"), or "selling words" (like "Everything must go," or "Clearance").

Question for the Bro. Eddie campaign copy writing team: How close is Bro. Eddie's message to any of these buzz generating messages?

There are also varied buzz communication media. These include celebrities, SMS or texting, guesting in live TV shows, product placement in movies, chain letters (e-mail), and the like.

Question for the Bro. Eddie campaign communication media managers: Which of these buzzcom media is Bro. Eddie's 7-7 strategy using? (Certainly, MRx is being deluged and spammed with dozens of anti-Noli email-every day! Hey, Loren tell your team to take it easy!) To do it right, get a hold of these resources:

Jerry Wilson, Word of Mouth Marketing. NY: Wiley, 1991.

Emanuel Rosen, The Anatomy of Buzz. NY: Doubleday, 2000.

Malcolm Gladwell, The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 2000

Bro. Eddie's 'majority' too silent?

What about the criticism from Bro. Eddie's camp that the pre-election survey figures on Bro. Eddie's SOVs (share of votes) are grossly incorrect. If, as they claim, the JIL (Jesus Is Lord) devotees are already near 3 million, the 1.8 percent SOVs or 682,203 Bro. Eddie voters do not even count as half of the 3 million. Even if we take account of the margin of error of 1.8 percent which is +0.75 percent, the upper end of 1.8 percent which is 2.71 percent would come up to only 1,027,095 pro-Bro. Eddie voters. That's still not even half of the 3 million Bro. Eddie voters.

So where's the rest of the 2M?

First of all, to expect that we should at least see a 3 million Bro. Eddie voters in the survey assumes that all 3 million will in fact vote for Bro. Eddie. There may be among the Bro. Eddie devotees who have relatives or distant relatives, friends of friends of, and *ka-probinsya* of one of the other presidential candidates. These voters are likely to say in the survey that they will vote these other presidentiables.

Also, in our own surveys, we found quite a number of voters who when the question on voting intention was asked, first answered FPJ or GMA. However, afterwards as our interviewers were about to leave said in whisper or almost apologetically: "Sa totoo lang, ke Bro. Eddie talaga ako." In other words, there are many pro-Bro. Eddie who, for one reason or another, are embarrassed or silent about their support for Bro. Eddie. (Perhaps this is Bro Eddie's "silent majority" who he says will win him the election?) To the extent that these are many, that's also the extent to which Bro. Eddie's SOVs is reduced in the pre-election surveys.

Mrx for Bro. Eddie

Our unsolicited prescription for Bro Eddie's "marketing director"

So what is our marketing Rx for making the buzz marketing 7-7 strategy of Bro. Eddie come closer to its true SOVs multiplier power? From our analysis and diagnosis, these are as follows:

- Give a voter segmentation focus to the voter conversion campaign by Bro. Eddie's disciple voters. This focus should be directed at the 36-43 percent p/p voter segment.
- Voters in this 36-43 percent p/p segment are made up of voter subsegments each of which vary in their practice or potential for block voting and therefore differentially capable to lending the much needed SOVs surges to raise Bro. Eddie's winnability image. So identify these voting-surge-rich segments and concentrate the voter conversion campaign on them.
- Appoint segment managers to make sure that the focused voter conversion campaign is implemented as planned and monitored to check deviations from plans and so that the campaign stays with each segment manager's assigned voting-surge-rich segment.
- Instruct each of Bro. Eddie's disciple voters to concentrate their 7-7 voter recruitment on the p/p convertible voters and not waste this on the already pro-Bro. Eddie voters or the disciple voters of the other presidentiables.
- Ask all Bro. Eddie voters and sympathizers to be proud about their intention to vote for Bro. Eddie and not to deny their intention especially if they happen to be sampled in a pre-election survey. (Looks like they're working on this already. We just got a "buzz" text saying, *"Maglantad na para kay Bro. Eddie!"*)

E-mail your questions or comments to MarketingRx@SaltandLightVentures.com. Or text us at 0919-314-54121!

SAYS AGAINST THE LAW

DOF bucks BIR move to ban sale of TCCs

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance is not inclined to approve a proposal of the Bureau of Internal Revenue to prohibit the sale of tax credit certificates. DOF said pushing the idea forward could adversely affect the country's investment climate.

The DOF also expressed doubts over the legality of such a move but the BIR is already gathering inputs for the planned issuance of a revenue regulation that will prohibit the sale of TCCs, which gives way to tax scams.

DOF Undersecretary Grace Tan said issuing a revenue regulation removing the transferability of TCCs would be in conflict with the Omnibus Investment Code, which allows its sale.

Tan said the DOF would turn down the BIR's plan to issue a ruling that will prohibit the sale of all types of TCCs. She added, however, that if the BIR would issue a ruling removing the transferability of TCCs, it would only have to cover TCCs that the BIR itself issues and not the ones issued by the OSS and the BOC.

OSS executive director Ernesto Hiansen said earlier he welcomed the BIR's proposal, saying the system allowing the sale of TCCs encourages syndicates from undertaking fraudulent tax credit activities.

HENARES

The DOF is the head agency of the BIR.

Companies granted tax incentives are allowed to sell their TCCs to immediately avail of the benefits and refunds, which usually take time to get when they directly go to the government.

"What the BIR is proposing is an extreme solution to the problem. What we should do is come up with a measure that will prevent tax scams, but at the same time protect the rights of investors," said Tan.

The BIR's proposal to prohibit the sale of TCCs followed the discovery of a P24-million tax credit scam involving the sale of used TCCs of Rohm Electyronics to Splash Manufacturing Corp. and Nissan Motors Corp. at a discounted price of P21 million.

The buyer-companies used the TCCs in settling their tax liabilities with the BIR, resulting in a P24-million loss to the national coffers.

The P24-million tax credit scam is just one of several cases of tax credit fraud. The biggest case involved the fraudulent use of TCCs by several firms belonging to the Chingkoe group of companies, which are owned by the Chingkoe couple Faustino and Gloria. The Chingkoes account for more than half of the P5.3-billion tax credit scams that happened in the 1990s.

BIR Deputy Commissioner Kim Henares said prohibiting the sale of TCCs will be a wise move to prevent tax scams. She said the BIR is studying whether the revenue regulation it plans to issue will cover TCCs issued only by the BIR or even those issued by the Bureau of Customs and the DOF's One-Stop Shop Duty and Credit Drawback Center (OSS).

S&P: No economic policy reversals after May polls

By Doris C. Dumlao

STANDARD & Poor's Ratings Services has not ruled out the possibility of another credit rating downgrade for the Philippines in case of adverse political developments.

The international rating agency is confident however there will be no sharp economic policy reversals after the May presidential elections.

Ping Chew, director for sovereign and international public finance ratings at S&P, yesterday told reporters that unfavorable political twists arising from the elections may affect the country's credit rating. However, he said there were other factors that could trigger a downgrade.

These include a further widening of the budget deficit, deterioration in the quality of banks' loan portfolios that may require financial assistance from the government or an unabated depreciation of the local currency.

Chew heads an S&P team doing an annual review of the country's credit rating. The results of this review will be released by July.

The S&P team met with advisers of three major presidential candidates, including those of actor Fernando Poe Jr. believed to be the strongest threat to President Macapagal-Arroyo's reelection bid.

S&P's current rating on the Philippines stood at BB with a stable outlook, two notches below investment grade. It was the first credit rating firm to downgrade the country's rating from BB+ last year amid concerns on ballooning debt burden and fiscal constraints.

After meeting with the economic advisers of leading candidates, Chew's team is convinced there will be little change in policies whoever becomes the next president.

"Policy-making in the Philippines is not totally centralized. Although the president's powers are huge, it filters in the implementation," Chew said.

Policy implementation is still an issue in the Philippines," he added. "Whoever is president still has to get reform measures through Congress."

He said the economic team of all candidates recognized the major problems hounding the country, such as reducing the budget deficit, implementing power sector reforms, increasing government revenue and addressing corruption.

While the government may have arrested the deterioration in revenues through administration measures such as a computerization program, he said the country would need to swallow more bitter pill to bring up the tax effort—or ratio of tax collections to gross domestic product—to 20 percent in the next few years.

"For (the Philippines' credit) ratings to go up, the fiscal consolidation needs to be more aggressive. As long as you don't consolidate the fiscal position, the country is vulnerable to shocks."

S&P's assessment followed a recent warning by the International Monetary Fund on the Philippines' vulnerability to large fiscal deficits, heavy debt burden, uncertain investment climate and slow reforms in the power and banking sectors.

The Fund, which urged the authorities not to loosen policies in the pre-election environment, is likewise concerned about the country's high levels of the public sector deficit and debt.

For 2004, the IMF recommended a more ambitious reduction in the deficit than that contemplated in the draft budget, noting this would bolster the credibility of the government's fiscal strategy. They also supported faster fiscal consolidation over the medium term than in the authorities' plan.

EU puts coconut oil in GSP list

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE PHILIPPINE coconut oil has been included in the European Union's Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) paving the way for lower tariffs on Philippine exports, the Department of Agriculture yesterday said.

Starting January 2005, the country's exports of crude coconut oil will have zero duty. Refined coconut oil, which has two kinds, will have a duty of 6.1 percent for the one used for food manufacturing; and 1.6 percent for industrial use.

"This would mean that the country has bigger potential of increasing its export of coconut oil products to EU countries," Agriculture Secretary Luis P. Lorenzo said in a press briefing.

The European Commission revised early last month its GSP listing and included Philippine coconut oil—the country's top agriculture export.

In another interview, Philippine Coconut Authority Administrator Danilo Coronacion said the European market constitutes about 47 percent or 447,000 metric tons of the country's total coconut oil exports. The United States is the second biggest market.

The agriculture department and the coconut industry are rushing to acquire copra driers to regain back the country's copra meal exports to Europe that has dropped by 19 percent and equivalent to revenue losses of about $20 million.

LORENZO

To cope with the stringent regulations imposed by the European Union on its copra meal imports, the DA, the Philippine Coconut Authority and the private sector are pooling their resources to buy 17 units of copra driers to be distributed nationwide.

The proper drying procedure would enable the copra producers to meet the maximum level of alflatoxin of 20 parts per billion (ppb) as prescribed by the EU as against the 200 ppb that the local industry produces.

Philippine copra meal is used as feed ingredient for livestock in European countries. However, in August 2003 the EU tightened its food safety measures as it has yet to resolve the mad cow disease pervading its livestock. High alflatoxin levels in food are being studied as a possible source of the mad cow disease.

Alflatoxins are also believed to be cancer-causing agents when passed on to humans.

"For the last seven months, the country's copra meal exports have decreased to 9 percent from a high of 28 percent because we could not meet the new regulations imposed by EU," Coronacion told the INQUIRER.

Coronacion added that to acquire the copra drier units, roughly some P225 million must be at hand.

"We are seeking the industry assistance to acquire these equipment. This is also for their survival," he said.

He noted that some financing could be obtained from Quedan Rural Credit and Guarantee Corp. to purchase these copra driers that costs P15,000 each.

So far, the private importer Cargill Inc. has purchased its own copra drier now being used in its oil mill in Saranggani.

"There is really a need to upgrade our copra meal and coconut production system or else we will lose our export market in South Korea and Vietnam that could also impose similar strict requirements," Coronacion noted.

Coconut oil and copra have been the country's top agriculture exports for the last five decades. Last year the Philippines shipped 1.137 million metric tons of coconut oil valued at $481 million. Copra meal exports amounted to 477,814 metric tons valued at $33 million.

BIR meets March revenue target

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue finally reached its target revenue collection last March after missing its goals for the first two months of the year.

The BIR said preliminary collection figure for March totals P32.3 billion, less than one percent higher than the P32.19-billion target.

BIR Commissioner Guillermo Parayno Jr. earlier said the better-than-expected collection for March was attributed to higher contributions by the BIR's large taxpayers' division and some of its provincial offices.

The preliminary figure for the month brings the BIR's year-to-date collection at P97.67 billion, about P4 billion short of its P101.08 billion target for the first quarter of the year.

In January, the BIR fell short of its P38.44-billion goal, collecting only P36.54 billion. The revenue agency likewise missed its target in February, collecting only P28.83 billion compared with its P30.45-billion target.

The BIR earlier said it was optimistic it could still meet or even surpass its P477-billion collection target for the year despite missing its first two months goals. The BIR said it was usual for the revenue agency to start slow because January and February are lean months, adding it normally begins catching up in April when many taxpayers remit their payments.

The BIR, which accounts for over 80 percent of the government's total revenue, is hard-pressed to improve its revenue collection to ease the country's budget deficit and help the government achieve its goal of posting a zero deficit in 2009.

The government's budget deficit, which results from higher expenditures than revenues, stood at P199.9 billion last year, P2 billion lower than the projection of P202 billion. This year, the government hopes to trim down the deficit to P197.8 billion.

Some of the revenue enhancement measures recently adopted by the BIR include expansion of the coverage of its computerized auditing system and the Centennial Taxpayers Recognition Program (CTRP).

Under the CTRP, qualified taxpayers that will exceed by at least 20 percent their income tax remittance in April this year from that of the previous year, and those that will surpass by 25 percent their first-quarter remittance in May this year compared with that of the same period last year will be given incentives.

Michelle V. Remo

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4. Stimulating Investment Opportunities to Preserve and Create Jobs: The Iligan Multi-Sectoral Experience
5. Sharing Strengths Among Competitors to Boost Competitiveness: The Uniform Manufacturers' Association of the Philippines (UMAP) Experience

PLENARY SESSION 5
Effective Population Management as a Competitiveness Issue

Plus! PANEL DISCUSSION
Managing Employment Flexibility to Enhance Competitiveness

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Her Excellency,
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Editor Aries Espinosa

Summer at the City Garden

HERE'S one great way to enjoy the summer without climbing up a mountain for an exhilarating view, or going down a river for a refreshing dip.

Vacationers can enjoy both, all at the same time, even without leaving the city. And all they need is an elevator ride 24 floors up to where the fun is for all of 24 hours a day-at the City Garden Hotel Makati.

This first-class international business hotel in the heart of the country's premier financial district offers a uniquely special family treat at its Roofdeck Bar & Grill, which has a Roman-inspired swimming pool and presents a magnificent view of the Makati skyline and the rest of the metropolis.

"This marvelous facility gives outdoor buffs the perfect high as they enjoy the best of both worlds, within the safety and luxurious comfort of the City Garden Hotel and for only P1,350 per person a day. This amount includes room accommodation on twin sharing, buffet breakfast for two, free use of the gym, pool and other hotel facilities, and even a free stay for two kids below 12 years old sharing room with parents," general manager Johnny Rios explained.

"Indeed, a great treat for a family of four, or even more. And for non-staying guests, they can also enjoy free use of the swimming pool for a minimum ala carte order of only P350+ at the Roofdeck Bar & Grill," Rios added, citing these offers as good for the whole months of April and May.

This "Summer in the Sky Special" adds another flavor to the City Garden's image as an "all-occasion location" and the home of authentic Mediterranean cuisine. Very reasonably priced, the Mediterranean dishes are among the many affordable luxuries that the City Garden Hotel-Makati is known for.

Another affordable luxury are City Garden's Italian-inspired rooms, which come for as low as P950+ on a twin-sharing basis, and have high-speed Internet, IDD/NDD telephone system, safety deposit box, well-stocked mini-bar, cable TV, 24-hour room service, and laundry and dry cleaning services, among others. The hotel also has a professionally staffed and fully-equipped business center with Internet access, fax, and photocopiers, and such services as secretarial assistance, documentation, airline ticket reconfirmation, tours and transport booking, and postal and parcel handling.

Moreover, reservations for meetings comes for as low as P9,750+ per day, parties for as low as P24,750+, weddings for as low P35,360+, and debut for as low as P38,360+.

Reservations or inquiries can be made by phone (899-1111), or domestic toll free number 1-800-101-Garden (427336), or at www.citygardenhotels.com.

The hotel is located in Makati's restaurant strip at 7870 Makati Avenue corner Kalayaan Avenue, Makati City, and is just five minutes from Rockwell and Glorietta Malls.

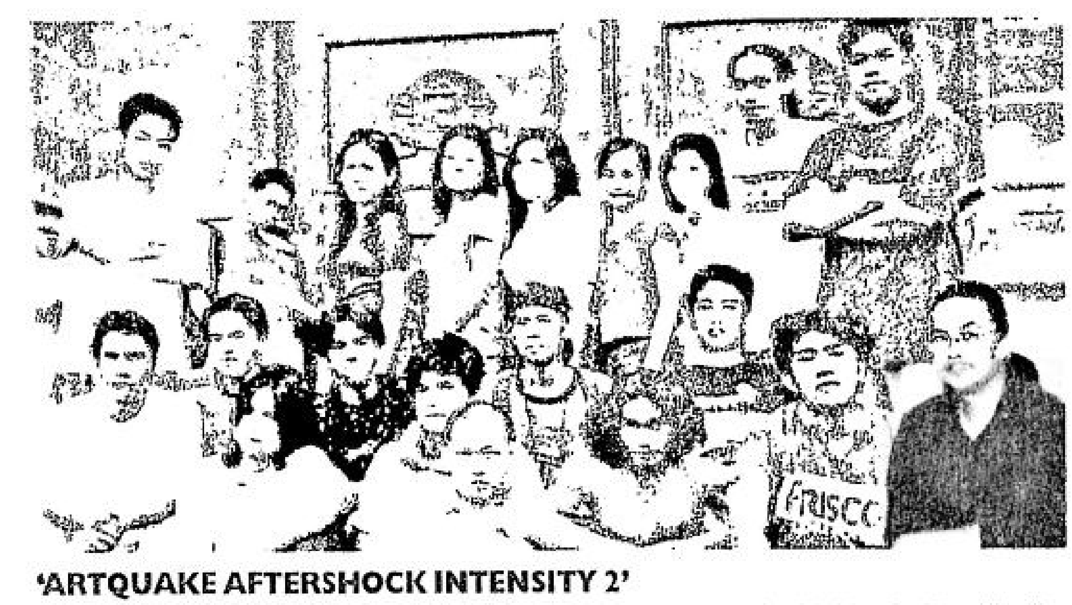
MAMA V HOLDS OPENING PARTY

Mama V Restaurant recently held its opening party March 27. Shown during the ribbon cutting are (from left) Herman Vitas, lawyer Jaime Valencia from Manila City Hall who represented Mayor Lito Atienza, Fr. Thaliyath, Mama V, Inquirer chair Marixi Prieto, and Tina Vitas. Guests sampled the 12 special flavor 'tapas' and another 12 varieties of home cooked dishes that Mama V launched in the market. This was aside from the 20 other dishes that Mama V whipped up for the occasion. Mama V Restaurant is at the ground floor of the Foodcourt, The Providence Tower on 2471 Leon Guinto corner Estrada streets, Malate, Manila.

Awards Night

FEA 2003 OUTSTANDING FILIPINO FRANCHISE OF THE YEAR

Max's Franchising Inc has been awarded as the Most Outstanding Filipino Franchise of the Year for Food Category at the recently held Franchise Excellence Awards (FEA) 2003 led by Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Secretary Cesar Purisima. Max's Restaurant, more popularly known as 'the house that fried chicken built' has nationwide operations with expanded operations in the US market. The only seal of excellence and the country's industry award, the FEA Award is given out to Franchise companies who have excelled in their respective fields and have exemplified the best ethical practices in their operations. Shown are (from left) Senator Robert Jaworski, Bing Limjoco (PFA president), Robert Trota, Robert Ocampo, Sharon Fuentabella (MFInc.), and Samie Lim (PFA chair and vice-chair for Asia-World Franchise Council)



'ARTQUAKE AFTERSHOCK INTENSITY 2'

Artquake Artist Circle is currently holding its 2nd Group Art Exhibit entitled 'Artquake Aftershock Intensity 2' which started March 29 at the Philamlife Lobby, UN Avenue, Ermita, Manila in cooperation with Philamlife Insurance Co. The exhibit was organized by FEU Fine Arts professor Mildred Castillo-Realuyo and participated in by young and talented artists Alexander Guevarra, Bryan Lim, Dexter Sy, Erly Lim, Godfrey Allen Realuyo, Irwin Ibarra, Ivy Grace Grama, Janddie Castillo, Jigger Cruz, Kennedy Somera, Lory Joy Ablola, Mark Dawn Arcamo, Marlene Dela Rosa, Michael Redford Catanyag, Mildred Realuyo, Ramon Realuyo, Raymond Cariaso, Reynaldo Tesorero, Reynante Chua and Rhodora Marie Ramirez. The exhibit runs until April 7.

Prevent Syndrome X

IN RECENT years, a sinister-sounding condition called Syndrome X has circulated in the scientific and medical field. It has been linked to the progression of several potentially deadly diseases.

Syndrome X is a term for a cluster of conditions that tend to appear together in some individuals. Hypertension, high triglyceride, high cholesterol, diabetes, obesity and coronary artery disease make up the cluster of conditions that define Syndrome X. A manifestation of three or more of the said conditions makes a person a likely candidate for the syndrome. A person with Syndrome X has increased risk for diabetes and heart disease.

Most of the symptoms of the syndrome can be treated with medications. However most physicians recommend regular exercise, proper diet and losing weight as the initial therapeutic strategy for preventing Syndrome X. When these lifestyle changes are no longer effective, a drug is prescribed to help patients manage Syndrome X.

In a research conducted by the United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and published in The Journal of the American Medical Association, results showed that 22 percent of adults between the ages of 20 and 79 have at least three of the symptoms of Syndrome X. Locally, it is estimated that 1 out of 5 adult Filipinos suffers from Syndrome X.

Syndrome X, for most patients, is usually caused by improper nutrition, inactivity or inadequate physical activity, and an increase in body weight. It is also often seen in people who are obese than in those who have normal body weight. Obesity occurs when the fat cells in a person's body increases in size than in number.

For an overweight person, simply losing up to 10 or 15 percent of one's current body weight can bring blood pressure down and increase the cell's sensitivity to insulin, said Dr. Pat Kendall, food science and human nutrition specialist at the Colorado State University.

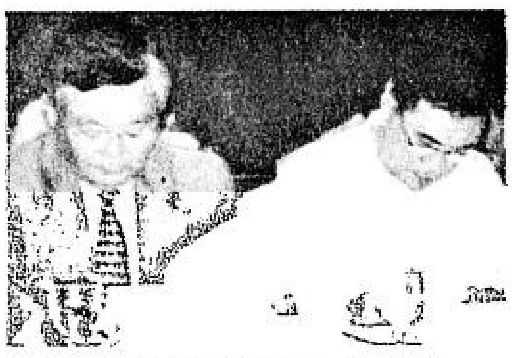
Orlistat is the only fat-blocker treatment that has been approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for use in the management of obesity in adults and adolescents and has clinical studies to prove that it could also improve total cholesterol level and blood sugar level, and reduce waist circumference. There are 30 reputable journals and evidence-based double-blind randomized controlled trials showing that orlistat is effective in managing Syndrome X.

Orlistat is the only available fat-blocker medication that works locally in the gut to prevent dietary fat absorption by around 30 percent. It is approved in over 140 countries. To date, orlistat has treated over 18.5 million patients worldwide since its launch.

The safety of orlistat is backed by the results of the landmark Xendos (Xenical in the prevention of Diabetes in Obese Subjects) study, which showed for the first time that a fat blocker medication like orlistat can significantly reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

Xendos is the largest and longest study, which lasted up to four years to show the safety and efficacy of this medication. It showed that treatment with orlistat produced significant improvements in cardiovascular risk factors. It also confirmed that orlistat has a long-term safety profile that is unmatched among any other drugs.

Consult your doctor to prevent Syndrome X. This is a prescription drug and should be bought at a doctor's advice.



JEXSA PROGRAM EVALUATED

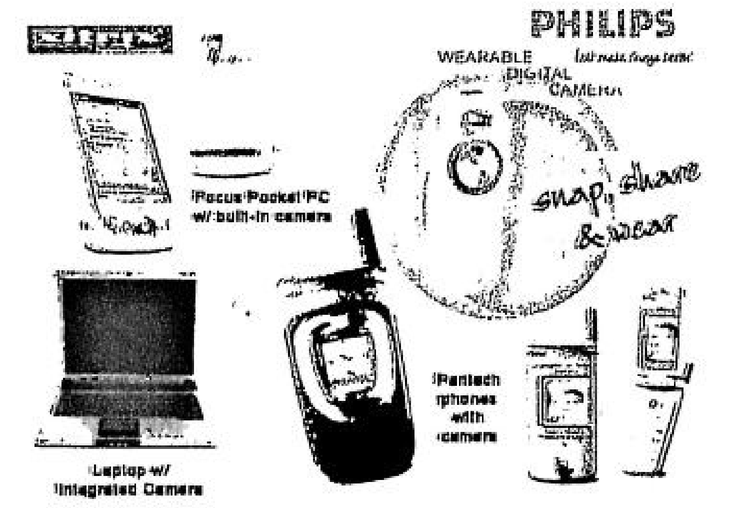
Toshio Asakura, Jetro Manila executive director (left) and Feliciano L. Torres, MVPMAP president are seen reading the evaluation of different presentations of achievements from companies enrolled in the Jexsa program. The program was appreciated and recognized by the Department of Trade and Industry, OE Manufacturers and parts makers for their efforts and valued guidance to MVPMAP members. Jexsa technical experts Seiichi Hori, Shosei Hiroe, Katsunosuke Shimada and Masaru Okada handled the program. At present, 72 companies availed themselves of the Jexsa program.

PHINMA LAUNCHES CONDOS

Phinma Property Holdings Corp (PPHC) recently launched Sunny Villas, a 1.4-hectare development with 812 Mediterranean-inspired condominium units in the heart at Pearl Drive, Commonwealth Avenue in East Fairview, Quezon City. A joint project with the Quezon City government headed by Mayor Sonny Belmonte, Sunny Villas is targeted for the middle-income earners. Sunny Villas is 5 minutes away from SM Fairview, Ever Gotesco and Robinson Big R and 10 minutes from the Quezon City Circle. Looking at the scale model of Sunny Villas are Wille Uy (left), PPHC president and Grant Orbeta, PPHC marketing manager. For inquiries, call 813-2126 or 0917-817-PPHC (7742).

ProductFILES

Nifty cameras at Nextech 2004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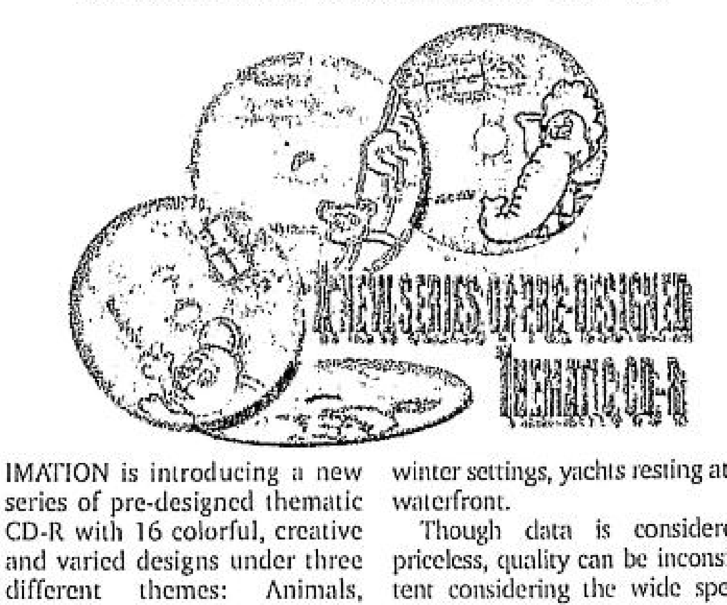
CAMERAS have become an everyday essential to most urbanites, from cell phones to pocket pc's, laptops, even keychains and other wearables are equipped with a digital camera. Check out the latest gadgets with built-in cams from Xitrix, Geo, Pantech, Philips and others manufacturers at Nextech 2004 April 30 to May 2 at the SM Megatrade Hall.

Nextech 2004 will feature some of the hottest gadgets and newest technology in laptop and desktop computers, wi-fi systems, home theaters, mobile electronics, pocket PC, security devices and more.

The event is made possible by Gadgets Magazine, EPSON Philippines, Jam 88.3, Wave 89.1, Magic 89.9, Rhythms 92.3, 96.3 WRock and Crossover 105.1 and organized by Montage Advertising Corp in cooperation with Exhibits in Action Corp.

For inquiries, interested exhibitors and participants can call 900-3485 to 88 or e-mail montage@nxdsl.com.ph.

Imation's thematic CD-R



IMATION is introducing a new series of pre-designed thematic CD-R with 16 colorful, creative and varied designs under three different themes: Animals, Dolls, and Beautiful Scenes, to suit users of all ages.

For animal lovers, the "animal series" offers six different creatures: a monkey, a baby elephant, a penguin, a mouse, a dog, and a snake, all set in bright and cheerful colors. The "doll series" tells a family story, comprising of characters from a family of dolls. Each CD depicts a joyful family moment, and presents one key character of baby, sister, daddy, mommy, grandpa or grandma doll. The outdoor nature scenes on the CD of the "beautiful scene series" that are appealing to travel and nature lovers are snowy mountains, wooden pier on a lake, trees in winter settings, yachts resting at a waterfront.

Though data is considered priceless, quality can be inconsistent considering the wide spectrum of CDs available in the market. Now, Imation delivers both form and function with these new thematic CDs: "Grade A" quality CD-Rs that can store up to 700 MB or 80 minutes of data, in unique and attractive designs. Being known for its reliability, Imation goes beyond by giving users a chance to now own a CD with personal touch-a design that they can identify with and call their own.

Imation South Asia is a subsidiary of Imation Corp and under the mother organization, Imation Singapore. The thematic CD-Rs from Imation are available now in all major IT shops and bookstores while stocks last.

BINIBINING AVON NAMED

Global beauty company Avon presented the special award Bb. Avon to Bb Pilipinas 1st runner up and best in long gown winner Tracy Ann Javelona during the Bb Pilipinas Coronation Night held recently. As Bb Avon Javelona received P10,000 cash, trophy, a one-year supply of Avon Color products and the opportunity to be featured in the widely circulated Avon brochure. Shown is Tracy with Avon senior manager for public relations Louie Migne during the awarding rites

Markets cautious over yen's sharp rise

A GRAPH displays movement of the dollar-yen rate at a foreign exchange brokerage in Tokyo. The yen was buoyant on Thursday, briefly rising near a four-year peak against the dollar on a broad improvement in Japanese corporate sentiment. REUTERS

SINGAPORE—The yen hovered near four-year highs against the dollar on Thursday after key Japanese data confirmed business confidence was strong, limiting losses in Tokyo shares despite a weak Wall Street.

Oil extended losses after data showed a jump in United States crude inventories to their highest level in 19 months.

Japanese government bond prices rebounded on weak Tokyo shares and fresh fund buying at the start of the new fiscal year, shrugging off the tankan survey which showed big businesses were doing better in March than at any time in almost seven years.

The yen's strength, however, clouded the outlook.

"It seems like the yen's sharp rise is sending a chill through the market, and foreigners, especially European funds, have started taking to the sidelines," said Yasuo Yabe, an adviser at Meiwa Securities.

The dollar fell to around 104.00 yen after the data, but crept back to 104.18 levels seen in late New York trade. It had hit lows near 103.40 yen on a rumor—later denied—that Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan had a heart attack.

Tokyo stocks closed down 0.3 percent at 11,683.42 despite the strong business survey.

Among exporters, car maker Toyota Motor Co. fell 3.6 percent, while camera and copier maker Canon Inc. dropped two percent and consumer electronics giant Sony Corp. sank 1.8 percent.

MSCI's broadest index of shares elsewhere in the Asia Pacific had edged up 0.3 percent by 0640 GMT.

Some Asian shares were weighed down by a weak showing on Wall Street after US regional economic data showed slower-than-expected business expansion in March and a contraction in the Midwest job index.

Taiwan and Singapore were flat, while Hong Kong slipped 0.3 percent. Shares in South Korea edged up 0.3 percent, lifted by a 0.5 percent rise in technology bellwether Samsung Electronics on earnings optimism.

Strong regional currencies hurt many exporters.

The euro slipped to around 128.00 yen from around 128.40 yen in late New York trade.

The common European currency was little changed against the dollar, parking slightly below $1.23. The euro gained more than one percent to a one-week high of $1.2323 on Wednesday.

The disappointing regional US jobs figure tempered optimism that Friday's national jobs report would finally show improvement in the sluggish US labor market.

Analysts expect a March payrolls gain of around 104,000, compared with a paltry 21,000 jobs added in February.

US equities fell after the weak regional data. The Dow Jones industrial average ended down 0.2 percent at 10,357.70, while the tech-heavy Nasdaq dropped 0.3 percent to 1,994.22.

Japanese government bonds rose, pushing the yield on the benchmark 258th 10-year cash bond down 1.5 basis points to 1.425 percent.

Oil dropped five cents to $35.71, while gold edged down to $425.25/$426.60 an ounce compared with $426.25/$427.00 last quoted in New York. *Reuters*

Corporate weakness hinders China from raising rates

BEIJING—China, seeking to get a handle on runaway lending that has fueled explosive industrial expansion, has used every policy tool but one—hiking interest rates.

Beijing has studiously avoided a rate rise—the usual way to tune the economy in developed countries—for fear it could push struggling companies against the wall by raising their borrowing costs.

"Many corporations are in a fragile state, and a rate hike could tip them over the edge," said JP Morgan economist Ben Simpfendorfer.

Rising costs of commodities and raw materials have overlapped with industrial overcapacity and tooth-and-nail competition that have slashed prices of goods, from cars to cell phones.

"The reluctance (to raise rates), I think, stems from the fact that, for most corporations, the margins are very, very thin," Simpfendorfer said.

China's rate on one-year yuan loans is 5.31 percent, where it has been since February 2002 after a series of cuts made to boost the economy as growth flagged in the late 1990s.

Now, with inflation rearing its head and the economy growing at its fastest pace in seven years, Beijing is trying to hit the brakes without sending the world's sixth-biggest economy into a skid.

Some analysts argue that, if recent moves to rein in credit growth prove insufficient, policy makers may resort to raising the benchmark interest rate for the first time in years.

"To counter the threat of economic overheating and inflation, China will need to adopt measures similar to those used in other market economies," said TJ Bond, Merrill Lynch's chief Asia-Pacific economist. "China needs higher deposit and lending rates, imposed upon all banks, along with a stronger and more flexible currency."

Bond expects rates to rise up to seven-tenths of a percentage point this year. Merrill Lynch is also forecasting a substantial 10 percent revaluation of China's fixed yuan currency.

But Beijing has ruled out a rate hike for now.

Instead, it has raided its monetary policy toolbox for other devices in recent months, fretting over signs that too much money is sloshing around the economy. *REUTERS*

Total transparency not possible, says Singapore gov't firm

SINGAPORE—The Singapore government's holding company—which is run as a private firm despite being funded by taxpayers—on Thursday said that total transparency would be impossible, as it faces pressure to be more open.

The government investment arm, Temasek Holdings, rejected a lawmaker's suggestion that it strive for even greater accountability than publicly traded companies because it is owned by the Finance Ministry.

Temasek controls many of the country's most prominent companies, including Singapore Airlines, SingTel and DBS Bank. It indirectly has stakes in more than 100 other companies, including US telecommunications carrier Global Crossing.

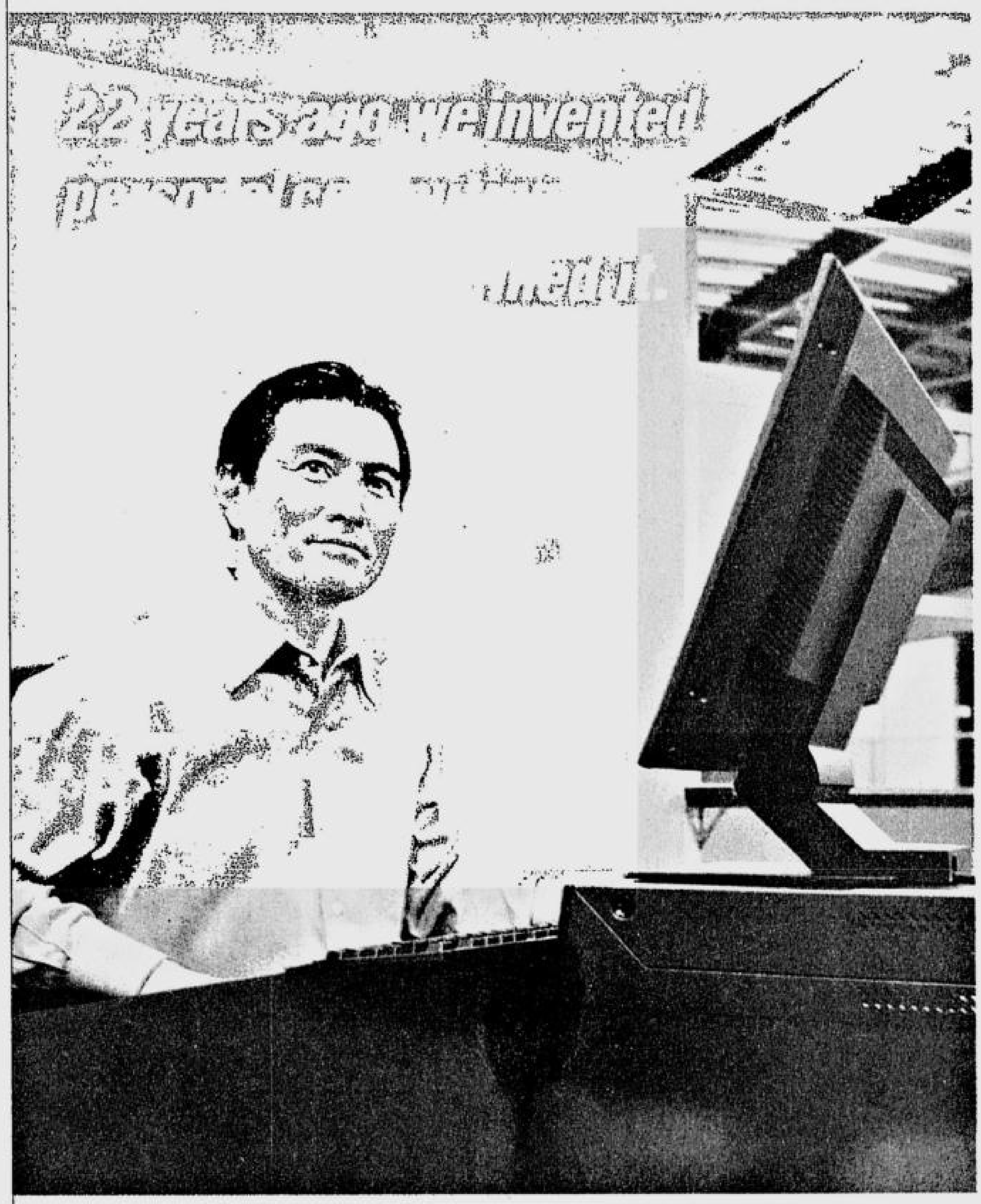
"Total transparency is not possible nor desirable, given the commercial confidentiality and market sensitivities which any commercial company would need to observe," Temasek spokesperson Eva Ho wrote in a letter published in the Straits Times newspaper.

Temasek's full holdings are not known. The company only says that it controls more than 20 percent of 22 major Singapore companies.

However, the government holding company has shown some signs of opening up, it announced last week that it would publicly release an annual report in July for the first time since it was established three decades ago.

As the Singapore economy slows after more than a decade of dazzling growth, Temasek has been investing more aggressively overseas, buying significant stakes in banks in India, Indonesia and South Korea.

Singapore's Institute for Policy Studies said in a 2002 report that Temasek should disclose more information to allay fears that funds were being mismanaged.



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RP GAINS headway IN GLOBAL OUTSOURCING INDUSTRY

PACIFICHUB SET TO OPEN 370-SEAT CALL CENTER IN ORTIGAS

WHILE THE COUNTRY HAS BEEN beset with domestic problems ranging from political squabbles, unemployment, skyrocketing price increases and the burgeoning debt crisis these past few months - and with the election fever expected to come full circle this May - a refreshing new twist to an otherwise gloomy scenario promises to provide a ray of hope for the Filipinos.

Call centers, which many believe to be RP's fast emerging sunshine industry, recently scored another shot in the arm as PacificHub, the newest call center firm to set up shop in the country, inaugurates a 370-seat contact center at the heart of one of the Philippines' most promising business hubs in Manila. Set to emerge at the Equitable-PCI Building at Ortigas in Mandaluyong is a state-of-the-art call center that's expected to generate jobs for this year's new graduates and possible career shifters. (According to Mr. Toby Monsod, former assistant secretary of the Department of Trade & Industry or DTI, the call center industry is expected to generate around 24,000 jobs in the next two years.)

...THE PHILIPPINES IS THE BEST PLACE IN THE WORLD to set up an infrastructure to support a call center business

"It's a very promising proposition," says Mr. Antonio S. Evangelista, chairman and chief executive officer of PacificHub. *"We'll be setting up a world-class call center operation in the Philippines and are excited at the prospects of a long-term growth in the call center industry. We believe that the Philippines is the best place in the world to set up an infrastructure to support a call center business and the continuing trend for outsourcing by multinational companies will continue to drive growth in the industry,"* he adds.

With a regular seating capacity of 370 contact agents that's expected to double by the end of the year, PacificHub will be using its new location to service inbound and outbound sales call requirements coming from all points of North America. Its key clients are from the US Fortune 1000 and represent the key industries of telecom, financial services and ISPs. To date, the company is rolling out an aggressive recruitment program in the Philippines and is expected to hire more than 300 contact center sales agents in the next 3 – 6 months.

"As in other countries, the challenge really now is to find qualified sales people who can take on the exciting role of a contact center sales agent. We're implementing best of breed recruitment and incentive programs that are better to anything that is currently in the market. The Philippines -- which has the world's second-largest American-English-speaking population -- can easily provide us with a large pool of sales professionals and a cost-competitive telecoms infrastructure," explains Mr. Bill McLaughlin, President and Chief Operating Officer, PacificHub. *"The thing is, there's still room for at least 50% growth in the industry for the next two years. After which, only the supply of capable human resources can determine when the exponential growth that we're seeing in the last couple of years will slow down,"* he stresses.

PacificHub is the latest member of the local call center industry which currently has about forty call centers located in Metro Manila, Clark, Cebu and soon in Davao. When combined, these companies employ a total of about 30,000 agents, supervisors and managers and this number is still expected to swell up to 60,000 by the end of 2004.

Mr. McLaughlin adds *"PacificHub is taking on a different strategy in relation to its call center set-up by focusing on sales and marketing initiatives for our clients. There is a lack of qualified sales channels available to market products and services to the US business community and we aim to fill that need."*

A PROMISING INDUSTRY

"The call center business is a very promising industry," says Benedict Hernandez, chairman of the Contact Center Association of the Philippines (CCAP). From 2000 to 2001, this segment reportedly grew by more than 200%, with local call center revenues expected to increase from $173 million in 2002 to $864 in 2004.[1]

According to the Department of Trade and Industry, the government expects ICT investments, which include customer contact centers as well as business process outsourcing, to double to as much as P13 billion this year from P6.42 billion last year. Customer contact centers chipped in 69% or about P4.46 billion of total investments in 2003. Optimism also runs high as an international research group forecasts the growth of ICT-enabled services to a $200-billion industry by year 2010; a portion of it (around $42 billion) is expected to go to the call center industry. In the US alone, there are around 1.5 million call center seats that may be outsourced and so far, the Philippines only has less than 10,000 seats filled -- indicating a huge potential for the local industry.

Many factors can be seen as a major contributor for the local industry's sizzling development pace. CCAP president Jose Ferreros cites as one of the most important factors the rising cost of doing business in industrialized countries like the US, which forces foreign companies to downsize and outsource peripheral e-services to developing countries like the Philippines. He also mentions the installation of better power and telecommunications infrastructure coupled with competitive labor costs (in terms of quality and value-for-money) and strong government support for ICT-related industries in the country. Of these, skilled labor is still acknowledged as the country's major advantage. Filipinos are renowned for their English proficiency, high IT literacy, warmth, trainability and customer orientation.

Indeed, the call center service industry is fast becoming a sector to watch out for. But industry leaders caution that while the Philippines has a good chance of grabbing a slice of the global call center pie, it will only be able to continue attracting investors if it continues to make the requisite improvements in infrastructure and labor quality.

---

[1] *"Call Centers – RP's Emerging Sunshine Industry" by Romelda C. Ascutia, Jobstreet.com.*

Our warmest greetings and sincerest congratulations to the management and staff of PacificHub Corporation on the inauguration of your high-tech contact center in Mandaluyong City on April 2, 2004 which will boast of a 370-seat capacity facility for contact center sales agents at any given time.

This endeavor is truly a welcome development for the Philippine call center industry as it complements our proposal allowing telecom providers to build an information highway linking Metro Manila's cyberparks. This will also help fast track the creation of an ICT corridor in the country while at the same time boost our prospects for becoming the leading contact center hub in the world. In addition, the Filipino's edge in their proficiency of the American-English language, high IT literacy, strong customer orientation and trainability should also be a major contributor to this cause.

Through this endeavor, we expect not only to draw in more local and foreign clients to our IT services offerings but also to project our local IT outsourcing services industry as a strong and capable sector than can deliver value propositions to clients. Indeed, this puts us another step ahead in our efforts to actualize the full potential of IT services as a dynamic pillar for economic progress in the Philippines today.

To PacificHub Corporation, our sincere congratulations and best wishes for success.

Mabuhay!

Cesar V. Purisima
Secretary
Department of Trade and Industry

PEZA CONTRACT SIGNING
Photo shows PacificHub's top executives (L-R) Annie Reyes, vice president and general manager; Antonio S. Evangelista, chairman of the board; Oscar Evangelista, vice president for administration and chief finance officer together with Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) director general Lilia De Lima and consultants Atty. Teodoro Peña and Rudy Ledesma during PacificHub's contract signing with PEZA.

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Mabuhay!

Lilia B. De Lima
Director General
Philippine Economic Zone Authority

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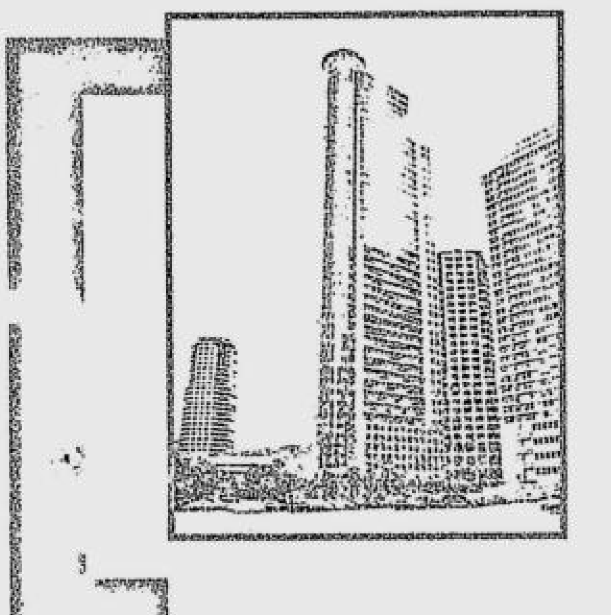
ADVERTORIAL

RP GAINS headway IN GLOBAL OUTSOURCING INDUSTRY

PACIFICHUB SET TO OPEN 370-SEAT CALL CENTER IN ORTIGAS



WHILE THE COUNTRY HAS BEEN beset with domestic problems ranging from political squabbles, unemployment, skyrocketing price increases and the burgeoning debt crisis these past few months - and with the election fever expected to come full circle this May - a refreshing new twist to an otherwise gloomy scenario promises to provide a ray of hope for the Filipinos.

Call centers, which many believe to be RP's fast emerging sunshine industry, recently scored another shot in the arm as PacificHub, the newest call center firm to set up shop in the country, inaugurates a 370-seat contact center at the heart of one of the Philippines' most promising business hubs in Manila. Set to emerge at the Equitable-PCI Building at Ortigas in Mandaluyong is a state-of-the-art call center that's expected to generate jobs for this year's new graduates and possible career shifters. (According to Mr. Toby Monsod, former assistant secretary of the Department of Trade & Industry or DTI, the call center industry is expected to generate around 24,000 jobs in the next two years.

"It's a very promising proposition," says Mr. Antonio S. Evangelista, chairman and chief executive officer of PacificHub. *"We'll be setting up a world-class call center operation in the Philippines and are excited at the prospects of a long-term growth in the call center industry. We believe that the Philippines is the best place in the world to set up an infrastructure to support a call center business and the continuing trend for outsourcing by multinational companies will continue to drive growth in the industry,"* he adds.

> THE PHILIPPINES IS THE BEST PLACE IN THE WORLD to set up an infrastructure to support a call center business

With a regular seating capacity of 370 contact agents that's expected to double by the end of the year, PacificHub will be using its new location to service inbound and outbound sales call requirements coming from all points of North America. Its key clients are from the US Fortune 1000 and represent the key industries of telecom, financial services and ISPs. To date, the company is rolling out an aggressive recruitment program in the Philippines and is expected to hire more than 300 contact center sales agents in the next 3 - 6 months.

"As in other countries, the challenge really now is to find qualified sales people who can take on the exciting role of a contact center sales agent. We're implementing best of breed recruitment and incentive programs that are better to anything that is currently in the market. The Philippines - which has the world's second-largest American-English-speaking population - can easily provide us with a large pool of sales professionals and a cost-competitive telecoms infrastructure," explains Mr. Bill McLaughlin, President and Chief Operating Officer, PacificHub. *"The thing is, there's still room for at least 50% growth in the industry for the next two years. After which, only the supply of capable human resources can determine when the exponential growth that we're seeing in the last couple of years will slow down,"* he stresses.

PacificHub is the latest member of the local call center industry which currently has about forty call centers located in Metro Manila, Clark, Cebu and soon in Davao. When combined, these companies employ a total of about 30,000 agents, supervisors and managers and this number is still expected to swell up to 60,000 by the end of 2004.

Mr. McLaughlin adds *"PacificHub is taking on a different strategy in relation to its call center set-up by focusing on sales and marketing initiatives for our clients. There is a lack of qualified sales channels available to market products and services to the US business community and we aim to fill that need."*

A PROMISING INDUSTRY

"The call center business is a very promising industry," says Benedict Hernandez, chairman of the Contact Center Association of the Philippines (CCAP). From 2000 to 2001, this segment reportedly grew by more than 200%, with local call center revenues expected to increase from $173 million in 2002 to $864 in 2004.[1]

According to the Department of Trade and Industry, the government expects ICT investments, which include customer contact centers as well as business process outsourcing, to double to as much as P13 billion this year from P6.42 billion last year. Customer contact centers chipped in 69% or about P4.46 billion of total investments in 2003. Optimism also runs high as an international research group forecasts the growth of ICT-enabled services to a $200-billion industry by year 2010; a portion of it (around $42 billion) is expected to go to the call center industry. In the US alone, there are around 1.5 million call center seats that may be outsourced and so far, the Philippines only has less than 10,000 seats filled - indicating a huge potential for the local industry.

Many factors can be seen as a major contributor for the local industry's sizzling development pace. CCAP president Jose Ferreros cites as one of the most important factors the rising cost of doing business in industrialized countries like the US, which forces foreign companies to downsize and outsource peripheral e-services to developing countries like the Philippines. He also mentions the installation of better power and telecommunications infrastructure coupled with competitive labor costs (in terms of quality and value-for-money) and strong government support for ICT-related industries in the country. Of these, skilled labor is still acknowledged as the country's major advantage. Filipinos are renowned for their English proficiency, high IT literacy, warmth, trainability and customer orientation.

Indeed, the call center service industry is fast becoming a sector to watch out for. But industry leaders caution that while the Philippines has a good chance of grabbing a slice of the global call center pie, it will only be able to continue attracting investors if it continues to make the requisite improvements in infrastructure and labor quality.

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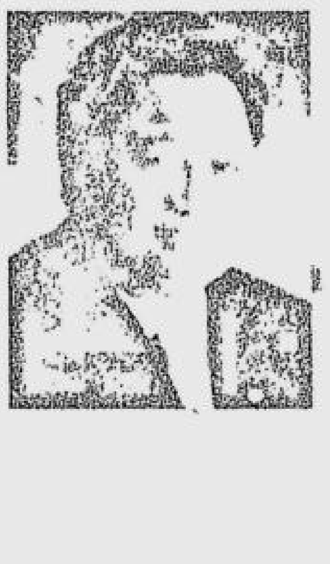

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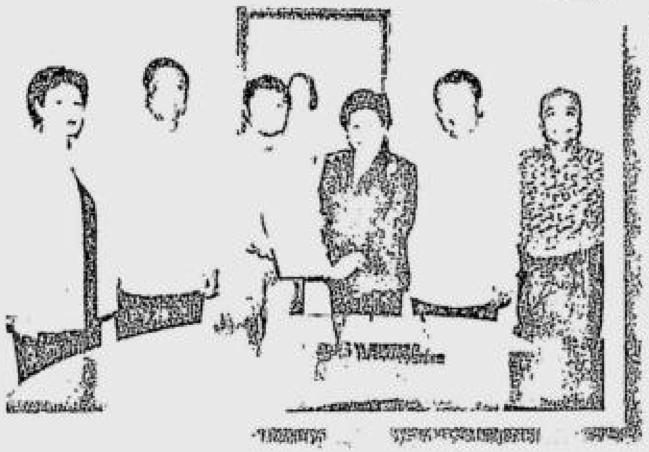

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PacificHub
CORPORATION

MESSAGES

A MESSAGE FROM
ANTONIO S. EVANGELISTA
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
PACIFICHUB

I congratulate everyone at PacificHub for our new state-of-the-art facility. This is only the beginning of many great things to come for our team.

These are challenging times and the mountains to scale will only get higher as our company gets bigger. However, I know that we have the right members on our team and where others see only hurdles, we see opportunities. That's why we did not spare anything in bringing to fruit a high-tech operations center manned by well-trained people. My many years in business have taught me that equipment is only as good as the people that use them. And people – from the rank-and-file to the managers -- is PacificHub's greatest and most valuable asset.

I am proud of you all!

Mabuhay!

A MESSAGE FROM
BILL MCLAUGHLIN
PRESIDENT
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To everyone at PacificHub, I offer an extended hand of congratulations and good wishes to all of you.

Cheers!

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ADB Avenue cor. Poveda Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City
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Email: hrd@pacifichub.net

COMPANY PROFILE

MISSION

PacificHub is a professional sales organization and is operating world-class outbound/inbound contact centers in the Philippines serving U.S. Fortune 1000 corporations. We offer the advantages of a highly educated, American-English-speaking labor force in the Philippines. In addition to the superior quality and commitment of our agents, PacificHub deploys the best of telecommunications and call center technologies.

PacificHub's primary focus is outbound/inbound sales support utilizing the contact channels of voice and email. Our technology allows us to fully integrate these channels into a single, state-of-the-art sale and support solution. As American-English has been the primary language of the Philippines since 1920, our sales associates possess a strong foundation for successful customer communication.

PacificHub's extensive training methodology equips each representative with the additional tools required to support each of our clients' specific needs, ranging from sales acquisition to full spectrum account management and support.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

One of the most important aspects of a successful company is the guiding principles and vision that drives the organization. This is especially true for customer centric companies, like PacificHub, where people are the foundation of the company's success. The guiding principles at PacificHub are:

- We conduct all of our activities in a truthful and considerate way
- We listen, anticipate and exceed client expectations and requirements
- We educate and equip employees to succeed
- We improve daily by sharing information and encouraging feedback
- We continuously work to improve employee and customer satisfaction
- We are our best through focus, process development and continuous improvement
- We assume responsibility for results
- We strive for profitability to ensure business growth and development

FOUNDING PARTNERS

The founding partners of PacificHub are combining their sixteen plus years of US call center experience and thirty plus years of owning and operating businesses in the Philippines, to form a professional call center operation focusing on call center services to the US. The US co-founder, Bill McLaughlin, has been in the call center industry for over sixteen years and held senior management positions with companies such as Teletech, CybeRep.com and most recently, eTelecare International. He is an experienced call center professional and a recognized leader in the industry. He is a sought after speaker for many of the industry trade shows in the US.

The Philippine co-founder, Tony Evangelista, is a seasoned business professional, born and raised in Manila. He has built a consortium of successful businesses in the Philippines over the last thirty years and recognizes the importance that the call center industry will play in the Philippines over the next five to ten years. The two founders are dedicated to becoming the driving force providing outbound/inbound sales programs to Fortune 1000 companies in the US.

CUSTOMERS & GROWTH

PacificHub, unlike most other start up call centers in the Philippines, has already contracted with clients. The contract period for each is two years. These contracts will fuel and drive enough growth for two call centers supporting 900 workstations and 1,300 agents. There are several other prospects underway for signing, which will allow PacificHub to add up to three additional call centers in the next five years. The three year build out plan is to have 5 offices in sites across the Philippines.

PEOPLE

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At PacificHub ongoing training and coaching ensures continuous quality improvement. This results and leads to a more stable and trained representatives to market our clients' products and services. Additionally, our contact centers will boast exceptionally low attrition rates, resulting in more stable, experienced and better-trained representatives to interact with our clients' customers.

TECHNOLOGY

In addition to our people, technology is critical to the effective management of our clients' business. Reliability, stability, quality and available bandwidth are key considerations for any outbound customer contact center. PacificHub has assembled a state-of-the-art network and systems infrastructure to provide our clients with world class solutions:

Toll quality private network between the U.S. and the Philippines
Fully integrated voice and data platforms
State of the art dialer technology
Digital voice recording systems
The latest technology in PC workstations
Proprietary QA and front end software

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PacificHub is building its call centers in the Philippines to take advantage of the talent rich labor pool, By doing so, the founders and the current client base firmly believe that PacificHub is providing superior sales and high quality results. By continuous development of our people and unending devotion to quality and superior results, PacificHub will become the premier provider of inbound/outbound sales in the Philippines.

To PacificHub Corporation:

The best is yet to come!

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PacificHub Corporation opens its doors to a state-of-the-art contact center facility.

Congratulations!!!

design.works
Authorized dealer Milliken carpets

MILLIKEN
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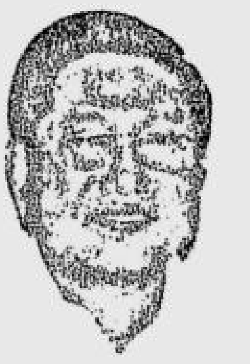

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PCA launches Philconstruct 2004

IN ITS continuous pursuit to promote professional services for the building and construction industry, the Philippine Constructors Association (PCA) officially launched the 2004 Philippine International Construction, Building Materials and Equipment Exhibition or Philconstruct 2004.

During a recent gathering of PCA members held at the head office in Pasig City, PCA president Emilio Tumbocon announced that this year's Philconstruct is expected to be the biggest and most comprehensive event ever for the Philippine construction and real estate industry. Now on its 14th year, the exhibition, which will be held at the World Trade Center, will showcase the latest technologies in construction as well as materials and equipment in industrial works, infrastructure development, real estate development and building construction both here and abroad. It will also feature the latest technological breakthroughs in structural and architectural components, landscaping products, interior finishing, appliances and fixtures for industrial, commercial and residential projects.

"The exhibition will be an ideal venue for local firms to develop or strengthen international partnerships as it will also attract participants from across the globe," said Tumbocon, who is also president of the Makati Development Corp. "The Philippines itself has excellent market potential and this trade show will feature potential customers from Southeast Asia. We are positive that this year's exhibit will open more doors of opportunities for the local market," he added.

Philconstruct, owned and organized by PCA, is the country's longest-running and most comprehensive construction trade show. Hundreds of companies serving the construction industry participate in the exhibit to introduce their products and services. The PCA is the country's oldest trade organization. Founded in November 1945, the association promotes professional services for the construction industry. It has over 1,500 members nationwide composed of builders and constructors who play a vital role in the country's national development.

PCA has also awarded the event management of this year's exhibit to Global-Link Business Communications Philippines Inc, a leading trade show organizer and the brains behind such successful exhibits as Autoshop Philippines, Manufacturing Technology World, Philtronics, Women's World, Cebu Food Expo and Total Office Products and Services Show. This development has brought excitement to the construction industry, bringing together the industry's big buyers through PCA's membership and Global-Link's expertise in organizing world-class and professional exhibitions. The organizers are confident that the exhibit will provide the whole industry with a one-stop-shop venue to network with clients and close business deals.

This year, Philconstruct will add a different approach to the exhibit as it will feature "Modern Home Expo" showcasing the latest and most advanced technology and products that can be used for homes, offices and buildings.

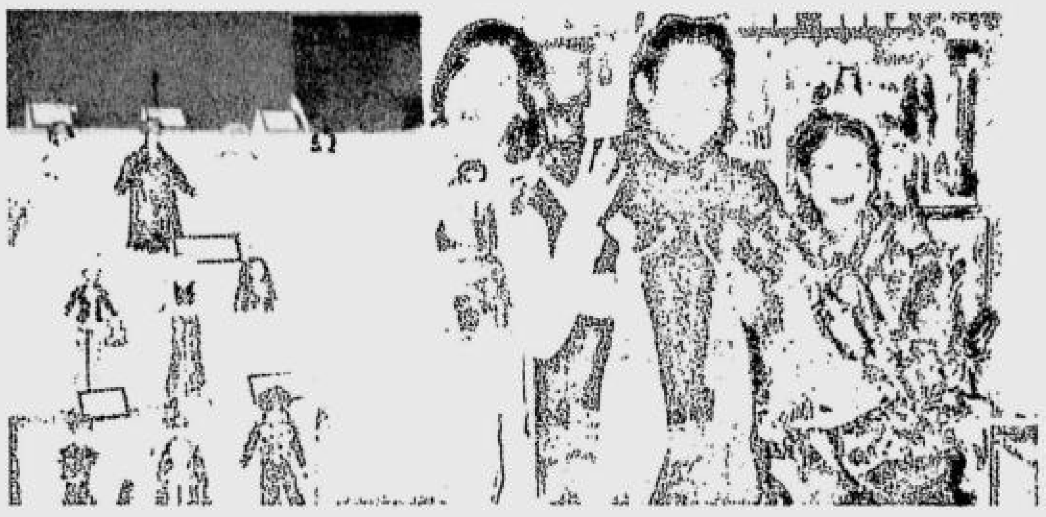
"With this new show, we hope to attract more people who are interested in modern living. We will feature furniture, home entertainment, interior and exterior products that will add great designs and modern looks to every home," Tumbocon revealed.

A special technoforum will also be included to provide industry practitioners with the global trends and perspectives on construction and other related fields. The organizers are expecting a display of 500 booths that will attract a wide range of customers, including architects, interior designers, engineers, specifiers, contractors, product designers and developers.

"Of particular interest in our yearly exhibition is the presentation of the country's best in goods and services in architecture, engineering and construction. This normally encourages small and medium enterprises to come up with quality construction and building products and materials that will benefit the industry," Tumbocon shared.

For years, PCA has been dedicated toward making the country's construction and public works industry world-class-one that can showcase Filipino competence. The association has been at the forefront of continued development of both domestic and overseas construction industries. Some of the prominent projects PCA and its members have handled include the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Folk Arts Theater, Magat Dam, North Expressway, South Superhighway, Kaliraya Power, SM Megamall, Edsa Ayala Interchange and the MRT.

PCA is now accepting applications for exhibitors at Philconstruct 2004. For inquiries, call Global-Link at 750-8588 or 887-1304, or e-mail jing@globallinkph.com.



'GURUS OF FASHION' COLLIDE AT MY SCENE BOOTH

The 2003 MTV Youth Fair was held at the Activity Center in Glorietta Dec. 5 and 6. All the event activities were about the latest and trendiest affair exclusive for the youth. My Scene lets famous personalities such as eventologist Tim Yap, fashion designer Rajo Laurel and fashion icon Tessa Prieto Valdes dress up My Scene Dolls in the 2003 Youth Fair. These famous personalities had their own distinct styles that made them famous in their chosen fields. My Scene Dolls are perceived as real dolls, with real personalities. The latest My Scene Dolls are available at SM Department Stores, other leading department stores and toy stores nationwide. For inquiries, call 732-5141 to 47 local 210 and look for Letty Defeo. Visit www.myscene.com or www.richwell.net. My Scene by Mattel is exclusively distributed by Richwell Trading Corp.

METROBANK
on Te Loan

METROBANK GRANTS ICTSI P1-B LOAN

Metrobank, the country's largest bank, recently granted the global maritime port operator International Container Terminal Services Inc (Ictsi) a P1-billion seven-year term loan for its port expansions. The loan-signing ceremony was held recently at the Ictsi administration building, South Access Road, Manila Container Terminal, Port of Manila. Shown sealing the agreement with a handshake are Metrobank SEVP Samuel S. Yap and Ictsi chair and CEO Enrique K. Razon Jr (2nd and 3rd from left, respectively). The other signatories are (from left) Metrobank SVP Jose M. Chan Jr and Ictsi SVP/CFA Noel M. Mirasol, and senior financial consultant Martin L O'Neil.

Kasulong sa Kaunlaran to uplift Bulakeños

BULACAN governor Josie Dela Cruz recently keynoted a memorable visit to Calumpit, one of the several municipalities in a series of visits ending March 24 by the provincial government officials, to bring the capitol to the people and directly hand over support packages for livelihood projects, education, health, and other services.

Calumpit received start-up packages for livelihood, such as the "Bisikleta, Bilis Kita," for some food or similar business on wheels with an initial funding of P2,000 for each beneficiary. Other individual beneficiaries each got P3,000 capital; one cooperative got a P100,000 loan for a consumer store; another for input supplies; and a rural water service cooperative for the expansion and rehabilitation of potable water service for a barangay. "Botika sa Barangay" was another package containing P25,000 worth of medicines each for four barangays.

The municipality also received a glucometer for diabetic patients, plus 100 pieces of glucometer strips; a medical kit worth P39,000; and wheelchairs.

Calumpit, being an agricultural economy, also got two shallow tube wells, four open surface pumps, 10 sets of vegetable inputs, 200 heads of organically raised chickens, 50,000 pieces of tilapia fingerlings, 200 pieces gill nets, and liquid fertilizer.

For education, a five-classroom building is about to be repaired. Thirty applicants for passports were also assisted.

"I may owe it to one from this town that I am now your governor, and this is a debt of gratitude that I am paying for personally," said Dela Cruz, "But my debt of gratitude to you, the people of Calumpit and Bulacan as a whole, is far greater for it has been your choice to accept me and the privilege to serve this town and province for six years is a sacred responsibility," stressed Dela Cruz , who is preparing to serve her third and last three years as governor.

Dela Cruz also said that her last term could only be as successful as the previous two terms or more so, if the people of Bulacan would allow the incumbent vice governor Aurelio "Rely" Plamenco to continue working with her.

Thus, the visit of virtually the whole top officialdom of the Bulacan Provincial Government to Calumpit and other towns, for that matter, with Dela Cruz and Plamenco at the lead, has been a stepped-up effort in recent weeks to reach out literally to the people, prodding them to catch up with the challenge "Sulong pa, Bulacan."

The March 12 visit gave Dela Cruz a surprise, with the public attendance at a substantial 6,000. Thus, she exhorted the audience that "every Bulakeño, whether party mate or oppositionist, friend or foe should enjoy a longer time being one with each other, and not be fighting."

Dela Cruz noted that the package of support services and assistance under Kasulong sa Kaunlaran are intended to help upset certain negative statistics. For one, the town has registered a much increased crime rate since 1999 at 2.46 then to 8.14 three years later, while other statistics show that unemployment and poverty have become more marked.

The provincial government has also identified related problems, possibly being at the root of the crime increase-insufficient and contaminated water supply in certain areas, air and water pollution, clogged drainage, garbage, and saltwater intrusion.

QUALITY SERVICE

ATI Group Inc, the country's largest engine and transmissions rebuilder, was recently lauded by the Provincial Bus Operators Association of the Philippines (PBOAP) for its commitment to quality and excellent after sales service. Shown is Jaime A. Chua (left), president of JAC Liner, Philippine Rabbit, Lucena Bus Lines and PBOAP member shaking hands with Butch Inducil, ATI group president and CEO. 'For the past five years, ATI has been our choice when it comes to engine and automatic transmission rebuilding. We are satisfied with the quality of their work,' says Chua. Aside from the monthly service commitment of ATI to Jac Liner's fleet of provincial buses, ATI also maintains the bus fleets of Victory Liner, Pangasinan 5 Star, Philippine Rabbit, Lucena Lines, Baliwag Transit, Partas Bus, Dominion Bus Lines, RCJ Lines and Genesis Transport among others. ATI has the largest service and parts facility for automatic transmission brands such as ZF, Voith, and Allison in the Philippines. The ATI Group engine and transmission facility is located along the Sta. Rosa-Tagaytay Road in Sitio Muson, Barrio Puting Kahoy, Silang, Cavite.

Improving English workshop

"DISCUSSION and Group Methods: Strategy Towards Achieving English Proficiency for Instructional Purposes Across Disciplines", a seminar-workshop for the improvement of skills in the use of the English language for communication is scheduled from April 19 to May 14 at the Roosevelt College Cainta Campus, Sumulong Highway. Ten sessions of 2 hours laboratory work and 2 hours practicum will be held Monday-Wednesday-Friday mornings. Enrollment begins on April 12 with a pre-seminar activity consisting of a diagnostic assessment of each participant to provide realistic direction to the seminar. For more details, call 681-6206 local 144, fax 646-5885/681-6214

Partner migration info

THE IMMIGRATION and Visa Office of the Australian Embassy Manila will host an information session on partner migration to Australia on April 14. The information session is designed to assist prospective applicants and sponsors understand the steps for applying for partner migration to Australia and to provide guidelines for preparing and lodging applications. Interested applicants should call 1909 362 2779 (PLDT), 1900 362 2779 (Globelines), or 1903 362 2779 (BayanTel).

NFHFI confab slated

THE NATIONAL Federation of Hog Farmers Inc (NFHFI) is set to hold its 13th Annual Convention and Exhibition from April 2 to 4 at the SM Megatrade Hall in Mandaluyong City. Hosted by the Alliance of Swine Producers Association and with the theme "Discover the Goodness of Pork", the three-day event will present to the visitors the latest equipment, materials and ingredients in the livestock industry. Open to the public for free, the NFHFI is inviting farmers, hog dealers and other industry related organizations to come and visit this year's convention. Interested companies, groups, and organizations can contact Fairs & More Inc at 845-1324 and 759-6680.

MFI scholarship deadline

THE DEADLINE for acceptance of applicants for the three-year scholarship program of the Meralco Foundation Institute (MFI) is April 3. MFI needs 150 students for the first year whose qualifications are: Filipino citizen between 16 to 22 years old; must be a high school graduate; passed the competitive admission tests, interview and orientation classes etc. Lucky applicants to the scholarship known as the Industrial Technician Program (ITP) will enjoy free tuition, uniforms, materials and supplies for all projects and calculators. Applicants for partial scholarship are also accepted especially for the two-year Information Technology (IT). ITP courses include: electrical, electronics, instrumentation, tool and die technologies. Requirements for applicants include: a photocopy of high school card and a copy of parent's income tax exemption certificate from the BIR and two 2" x 2" ID pictures; two recommendation letters affixed with school dry seal - one from the principal and one from the guidance counselor, etc. Application forms may be obtained from the Registrar's office at MFI Bldg. on Ortigas Ave. in Pasig with tel. nos. 632-0756 to 67 locals 431, 432 or 433.

MC holds Summer Sale

MC HOME Depot, the pioneer and the most innovative construction and homebuilding store in Metro Manila, is currently holding its Summer Sale. The sale will run from March 26 to April 4 in all three branches of MC - MC Home Builders' Depot in Makati, MC Home Depot Ortigas in Pasig City, and MC Home Depot Fort Bonifacio in Global City, Taguig. Aside from discounts, the Summer Sale will also feature a special raffle promo for all customers. A total of 45 appliances will be given away for the raffle including 15 aircon units, 15 refrigerators and 15 washing machines.

TIP Manila Commencement

THE TECHNOLOGICAL Institute of the Philippines Manila is set to hold its 42nd Commencement Exercise on Monday, April 12, at 1 to 5 p.m. at the Plenary Hall of the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City. Dr. Estrella F. Alabastro, Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) will be the commencement speaker. More than 1,000 graduates from the different programs of the school will receive their diplomas and certificates. Among the other activities scheduled to be attended by the 2004 graduates are the Recollection and the Baccalaureate Mass at the TIP Manila Casal Big Court one week before the commencement day. The TIP Manila 42nd Commencement Exercises will be participated in by the school's academic and administrative officers, faculty members, and employees.

MSV Classics Illustrated

LOOKING for Mr. Right? Fixing a broken heart? Falling in love for the first time? Experience all the feelings that answer every romantic need by reading an innovative kind of pocketbooks - My Special Valentine (MSV) Classics Illustrated. With two sets already in the market, this is the label of romantic novels from Bookware Publishing Corp with exciting artworks made possible by a new breed of writers and artists. The company is releasing the third set of MSV Classics. Incidentally, the "Nokia 3650 Raffle Promo" for readers of the regular MSV pocketbooks is still ongoing and will have a grand draw on September 2004. The recent monthly

DLSU GSB tops chess

THE De La Salle University Graduate School of Business (DLSU GSB) grabbed the first place in the Chess Tournament of the 2004 Inter-MBA Friendship Games. Held last March 21 at the Ateneo Campus in Salcedo Village, Makati the winning team composed of Kit Lumingkit, Reuel Cuello, Joseph Cruel, and Carlo Cruz bested UST and AIM grad students who had to settle for 2nd and 3rd places respectively. Representing schools from Ateneo, DLSU, UST and AIM, these students of graduate schools abided by the Fide laws of Chess as well as specific regulations prescribed by the Metropolitan Chess Club. The chessfest is part of the on-going Friendship Games. Included in the tournament are the following events: Men's Basketball, Women's Volleyball, Badminton, bowling and billiards.

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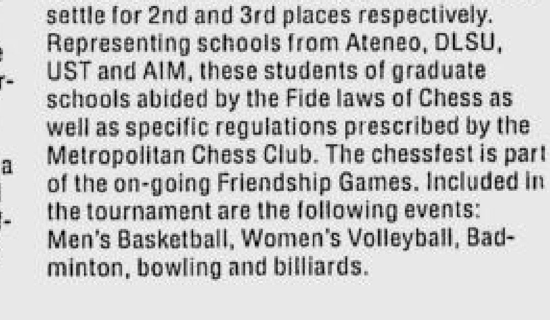

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice of extra judicial partition of the estate of the late Justice Andres C. Reyes, Sr. has been settled as per Doc. No. 265; Page No. 53; Book No II; Series of 2003 before Notary Public Atty. Ma. Lourdes Reyes for the City of Makati (PDI - March 19, 26 & April 2, 2004)

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
AD NO. MMD-TRANSCO 2004-015

PD Ref. No.: PB040114-EL0001 (PB2)

1. The **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION, BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (TRANSCO – BAC) – HEAD OFFICE**, invites local bidders/contractors to apply for eligibility who are:
   - a. Duly licensed Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships; or
   - b. Partnerships duly organized under the laws of the Philippines and of which at least sixty percent (60%) of the interest belongs to citizens of the Philippines; or
   - c. Corporations duly organized under the laws of the Philippines, and of which at least sixty percent (60%) of the outstanding capital stock belongs to citizens of the Philippines; or
   - d. Manufacturers, suppliers and/or distributors forming themselves into a joint venture, i.e., group of two (2) or more manufacturers, suppliers and/or distributors that intend to be jointly and severally responsible or liable for a particular contract; Provided, however, that Filipino ownership or interest of the joint venture concerned shall be at least sixty percent (60%); or
   - e. Cooperatives duly registered with the Cooperatives Development Authority (CDA).
2. **Procurement of :**

Schedule	Description	Quantity	Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid
I	WIRELESS MODEM (GSM) FOR C & I REVENUE METERS	30 SETS	P 2,500,000.00
II	DATABASE SERVER INTEL XEON W/ RACK	1 PC	P 500,000.00
III	MOBILE PC	1 UNIT	P 150,000 00
IV	PRINTER MEMORY	1 PC	P 3,000 00
V	DIGITAL CAMERA	6 UNITS	P 180,000 00
VI	DIGITAL CAMERA	1 UNIT	P 27,000 00
VII	SPSS BASE 11.5 OR 12 0 (STANDALONE)	1 UNIT	P 85 900 00
VIII	TOAD STANDARD EDITION 7 0	1 UNIT	P 48,000 00
IX	LASERJET PRINTER (NETWORK)	2 UNITS	P 96,000 00
X	LASERJET PRINTER	8 UNITS	P 320,000 00
XI	INKJET PRINTER	2 UNITS	P 30,000 00
XII	UNINTERRUPTIBLE POWER SUPPLY	2 UNITS	P 130,000 00
XIII	SCANNER	1 UNIT	P 15,000 00
XIV	FACSIMILE	1 UNIT	P 18,000 00
XV	INK CARTRIDGES	10 PCS	P 11,000 00
	TOTAL		P 4,113,900.00

3. The contract to be performed by the successful bidder shall be specified in the Technical Quotation Form of the Bid Documents that will be issued.
   The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to be Bid is *P 4,113,900.00* to be sourced from the Internal Cash Generation of TransCo.
4. The Bid Documents will be available for issuance starting *April 2, 2004 to May 4, 2004* at the BAC Secretariat Office, National Transmission Corporation, Materials Management Division (MMD), Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City upon payment of non-refundable fee of Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00) per set.
5. Pre-Bid Conference will be held on *April 21, 2004 at 10:00 A.M.* at the Admin Conference Room, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City.
6. Deadline for submission, receipt and opening of bids shall be on or before *2:00 P.M. of May 5, 2004* at the Admin Conference Room, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Ave. corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City. If the date falls on a non-working day or declared non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.
7. All particulars relative to the eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations-A of Republic Act 9184.
8. TransCo reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the Corporation.
9. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) ANTONIO G. LABAYANI
Chairman, Bids and Award Committee

(PDI – April 2 & 11, 2004)

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April 2, 2004 (Friday)		April 3, 2004 (Saturday)	
11:00 to 11:45 AM	HOW CALL CENTERS HIRE PEOPLE Ms. Guia Bengzon, Operations Director, Call Center Academy	11:00 to 11:45 AM	ENGLISH AND CUSTOMER SERVICE TRAINING Ms. Guia Bengzon, Operations Director, Call Center Academy
2:00 to 2:45 PM	IMAGE ENHANCEMENT Ms. Aida Valves, President, ATV Speakers Network	2:00 to 2:45 PM	DO WHAT YOU LOVE TO DO AND GET PAID FOR IT Ms. Jean Lim, President, Powervision
4:00 to 4:45 PM	TIPS AND TECHNIQUES IN PASSING JOB INTERVIEWS Dr. Jose Mardena, President, Speechpower	4:00 to 4:45 PM	ACQUIRING AMERICAN ACCENT Dr. Jose Mardena, President, Speechpower

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Victoria, Alicia, Isabela
Tel. No. (078) 662-7103, 662-7983, 662-7810
Fax No. (078) - 6627103
-6627917

INVITATION TO SUBMIT BID PROPOSAL

Isabela-1 Electric Cooperative, Inc., wishes to invite interested supplier to submit bid proposal for a commodity loan as follows:

a. Supply, installation and commissioning of 10 MVA substation including metering and protection equipments but excluding site development.
b. Supply, construction and commissioning of 24 kilometers 69 KV lines along the national road between Santiago City and Cabatuan, Isabela.

Interested parties may secure bid proposal documents for a commodity loan at the Management Internal Auditing Department. Furthermore, please consider the following to supplement your best proposal:

a) Type of loan – Commodity loan
b) Terms of payment:
  Down payment – 10% of offered price
  Balance is payable within 5 years
c) First amortization starts upon commissioning

The schedule of activities are as follows:

	PARTICULARS		DATE/TIME
A)	1. Submission of qualification requirements	–	April 5, 2004
	2. Issuance of notice to all qualified and disqualified suppliers	–	April 6, 2004
B)	Issuance of Documents to qualified suppliers for the commodity loan and payment of filing fee	–	April 6-12, 2004
C)	Submission of bid proposals	–	April 19, 2004
D)	Evaluation of submitted bid proposals	–	April 20, 2004
E)	Awarding to supplier with best proposal	–	April 21, 2004

The Checklist of qualification requirements are the following:

1. Non-refundable filing fee in the amount of THREE THOUSAND PESOS ONLY (P3,000.00) in the form of cash.
2. Supplier with National Electrification Administration accreditation.
3. Complete set of legal documents of the company, i.e., SEC registration, Articles of Inc. and By-laws, and Company Profile Business registration and license papers.
4. Audited Financial Statements (Balance Sheet and Income Statement) duly filed-stamped received by BIR.
5. If represented by an agent of the firm, he/she must have a letter from the President/Manager/Owner that he/she is the authorized representative.

The ISELCO-1 reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect thereon and make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the coop (ISELCO-1). The ISELCO-1 likewise assumes no obligation for whatever losses that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that the award shall be made.

(Sgd.) **ENGR. VIRGILIO L. MONTANO**
TSD Manager/Management Team Leader

(PDI-March 31, April 1 & 2, 2004)

FINAL INVITATION TO UNDERTAKE THE PROPOSED ISABEL, LEYTE, RECLAMATION PROJECT, PROVINCE OF LEYTE, REGION VIII, UNDER A JOINT VENTURE ARRANGEMENT

The Municipality of Isabel, Leyte (Philippines) is inviting interested parties to submit application to apply for **eligibility**, and **subsequents to bid** of Pre-qualified to undertake the reclamation and development of about **ONE HUNDRED TWENTY EIGHT (128)** hectares of **foreshore and offshore areas** (Project) along Dupong Bay, Isabel, Leyte intended to mixed use development such as commercial, industrial, residential among others

The project shall be undertaken on a joint venture arrangement with the Municipality whereby the Proponent/Developer shall advance all costs of reclamation and development and shall be paid in the form of land rental or land to be reclaimed

The Proponent/Developer must show proof of its legal, technical and financial capability and must submit the following pre-qualification documents attached to its letter of intent addressed to the Municipality to undertake the project.

1. *Non-Refundable Filling Fee in the amount of Php22,000.00 inclusive of VAT payable to the Municipality in the form of cash, manager's check or cashier's check;*
2. *Original Copy of SEC Certification of Good Standing Record.*
3. *Complete set of legal documents of the organization, ie, company Profile or Principal Proponent and each firm and members if consortium, SEC Registration, Articles of Incorporation & By-laws, and Company Profile, Business Registration and License Papers;*
4. *Audited Financial Statements for the last three (3) years (balance sheets and income statement) of Principal Proponent duly filed/stamped received by BIR,*
5. *Affidavit of undertaking that if awarded the contract to provide financing for the project estimated to be not less than Php1.587 Billion.*
6. *Credit lines in specific amount issued and certified by reputable banks and financing institutions.*

All qualified Proponent(s)/Developer(s) shall be advised to submit letters of Intent and its project feasibility study.

Deadline for submission of letters of Intent to undertake the project including required attachment shall be on **May 18, 2004** at 10:00 A.M. at the Office of the Mayor, Isabel, Leyte, Tel No. (053) 337-2083.

(Sgd.) **HON. ROBERTO P. FUENTES, JR.**
Municipal Mayor

(PDI–April 1, 2 & 3, 2004)

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID AD NO. MMD-TRANSCO 2004-013

PD Ref. No.: PB040212-EL0027

1. The **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION, BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (TRANSCO – BAC) – HEAD OFFICE**, invites local bidders/contractors to apply for eligibility who are:
   a. Duly licensed Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships; or
   b. Partnerships duly organized under the laws of the Philippines and of which at least sixty percent (60%) of the interest belongs to citizens of the Philippines; or
   c. Corporations duly organized under the laws of the Philippines, and of which at least sixty percent (60%) of the outstanding capital stock belongs to citizens of the Philippines; or
   d. Manufacturers, suppliers and/or distributors forming themselves into a joint venture, i.e., group of two (2) or more manufacturers, suppliers and/or distributors that intend to be jointly and severally responsible or liable for a particular contract; Provided, however, that Filipino ownership or interest of the joint venture concerned shall be at least sixty percent (60%); or
   e. Cooperatives duly registered with the Cooperatives Development Authority (CDA).
2. Procurement of Spareparts for BK117 C1 Helicopter & Super King Air 350
3. The contract to be performed by the successful bidder shall be specified in the Technical Quotation Form of the Bid Documents that will be issued. The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to be bid *P 7,179,758.96* to be sourced from the Internal Cash Generation of TransCo.
4. The Bid Documents will be available for issuance starting ***April 2 - 29, 2004*** at the BAC Secretariat Office, National Transmission Corporation, Materials Management Division (MMD), Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City upon payment of non-refundable fee of **Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00)** per set.
5. Pre-Bid Conference will be held on ***April 19, 2004 at 2:00 P.M.*** at the Admin Conference Room, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City.
6. Deadline for submission, receipt and opening of bids shall be on or before ***10:00 A.M. of April 30, 2004*** at the Admin Conference Room, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Ave. corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City. If the date falls on a non-working day or declared non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.
7. All particulars relative to the eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations-A of Republic Act 9184.
8. TransCo reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the Corporation.
9. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) **ANTONIO G. LABAYANI**
Chairman, Bids and Award Committee

(PDI – April 2 & 11, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
MANILA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY
MIAA Administration Building, MIA Road, Pasay City, Metro Manila

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) is inviting interested Parking Systems Developers, Integrators and Distributors to apply for eligibility and submit bid proposal for the Project: Supply and Installation of Parking Access and Revenue Control System for NAIA Centennial Terminal 2

Scope of Work

- Delivery, Installation of entry/exit stations, automatic barriers, manual payment stations, loop detectors, computer system/software, UPS, and all necessary cables and conduits, and
- Testing and Commissioning of the Parking System

Must be at least three (3) years in the business of developing and implementing parking systems

The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) in the amount of Php8,500,000.00 will be sourced through the corporate fund of the Authority

The aforementioned project shall be completed within 90 calendar days from the issuance of approved Work Order

All interested parties are invited to submit letter of intent and procure bidding documents from the Secretariat, Bids and Awards Committee (BAC2), office of the AGM for Finance and Administration, 2nd Level, MIAA Administration Building, MIA Road NAIA, Pasay City, upon the payment of a non-refundable fee of Php1,000.00 from March 30 to April 2, 2004.

BAC shall use "pass or fail" criteria to determine the eligibility of prospective bidders. As such non-submission or any patent insufficiency in any of the eligibility requirements will result in the disqualification of the bidders

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Pre-Bid Conference	April 14, 2004 2:00 p.m
Deadline of Submission of Eligibility Documents & Bids	April 28, 2004 2:00 p.m.
Opening of Bids	April 28, 2004 2:30 p.m. Admin Boardroom 4th Level, MIAA Admin Bldg. MIA Road, Pasay City

MIAA reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive any defect of informality, and assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate and indemnify expenses the bidders may incur in the preparation of bids and to accept an offer most advantageous to the Government. Any questions arising from the herein compliance shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. No. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Reform Act

(Sgd.) **ENGR. MARCELINO R. YUMOL, JR.**
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee (BAC2)

(PDI-March 26 & April 2, 2004)

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TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID AD NO. MMD-TRANSCO 2004-016

PD Ref. No.: PB040309-EL0036

1. The **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION, BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (TRANSCO – BAC) – HEAD OFFICE**, invites local bidders/contractors to apply for eligibility who are:
   a. Duly licensed Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships; or
   b. Partnerships duly organized under the laws of the Philippines and of which at least sixty percent (60%) of the interest belongs to citizens of the Philippines; or
   c. Corporations duly organized under the laws of the Philippines, and of which at least sixty percent (60%) of the outstanding capital stock belongs to citizens of the Philippines; or
   d. Manufacturers, suppliers and/or distributors forming themselves into a joint venture, i.e., group of two (2) or more manufacturers, suppliers and/or distributors that intend to be jointly and severally responsible or liable for a particular contract; Provided, howeve, that Filipino ownership or interest of the joint venture concerned shall be at least sixty percent (60%); or
   e. Cooperatives duly registered with the Cooperatives Development Authority (CDA).
2. **Procurement of :**
   SUPPLY, DELIVERY, INSTALLATION & COMMISSIONING OF REMOTE FIBER OPTICS CABLE MONITORING SYSTEM
3. The contract to be performed by the successful bidder shall be specified in the Technical Quotation Form of the Bid Documents that will be issued. The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to be Bid is ***P 5,000,000.00*** to be sourced from the Internal Cash Generation of TransCo.
4. The Bid Documents will be available for issuance starting ***April 2 - 29, 2004*** at the BAC Secretariat Office, National Transmission Corporation, Materials Management Division (MMD), Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City upon payment of non-refundable fee of **Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00)** per set.
5. Pre-Bid Conference will be held on ***April 19, 2004 at 10:00 A.M.*** at the Admin Conference Room, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City.
6. Deadline for submission, receipt and opening of bids shall be on or before ***10:00 A.M. of May 4, 2004*** at the Admin Conference Room, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Ave. corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City. If the date falls on a non-working day or declared non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.
7. All particulars relative to the eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations-A of Republic Act 9184.
8. TransCo reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the Corporation.
9. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) **ANTONIO G. LABAYANI**
Chairman, Bids and Award Committee

(PDI – April 2 & 11, 2004)

PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE

INVITATION TO BID

The asset being offered for **Public Bidding** is a parcel of land with an area of 2,012 sq.m., more or less, covered by Transfer Certificate of Title No. 390162 located at **EDSA corner Berkeley Sts., Brgy. Wack-Wack, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City.**

The abovementioned asset is being offered on an **"as-is, where-is"** basis, at the following Indicative Price:

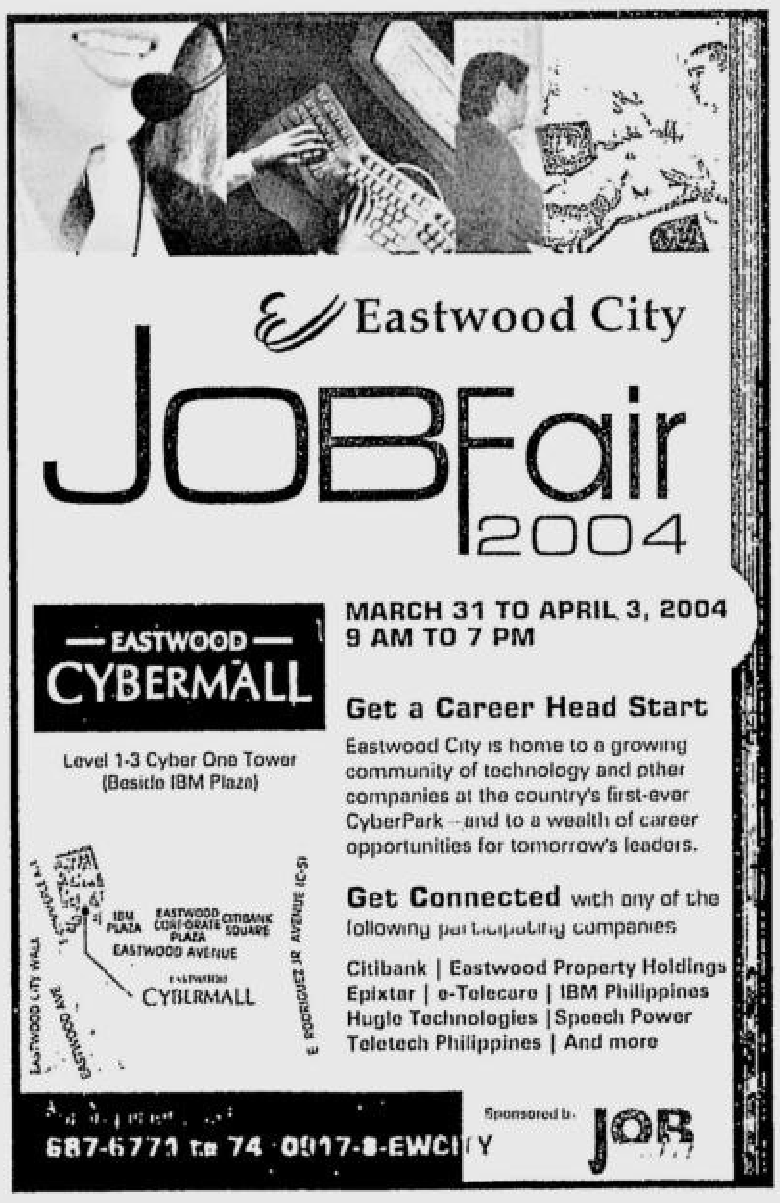
One (1) Lot – P80,480,000.00

Bids will be received, opened and tabulated in the presence of the bidders on **April 30, 2004** at 3:00 p.m. at the PMO Conference Room, 6th Floor, PMO Bldg., 104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Interested parties may request for duly authenticated copies of the **Asset Specific Bidding Rules (ASBR), Asset Specific Bidding Form (ASBF)** together with **the Asset Specific Catalogue** for a non-refundable nominal fee of P500.00.

In the event this bidding fails, PMO reserves the right to accept proposals submitted for the above asset.

For more information, please call Ms. Melinda B. Cortez of the PMO Marketing Office at telephone no. 892-21-45/818-4733.



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NFA Announces the Arrival of Imported Rice under USPL 480 Program

SOME 47,000 metric tons of iron-fortified rice have arrived in the country as part of the government's rice importation contracted under the US PL 480 program last year.

National Food Authority administrator Arthur C. Yap said the volume accounts for 34 percent of the total of 117,817 metric tons (MT) rice loan granted to the Philippine government to beef-up the country's reserves of the nutrition-rich fortified rice.

Yap said this importation worth $40 million was negotiated last year by the government under the US PL 480 commodity loan program. Signed for the government by the Department of Finance (DoF), the PL 480 loan is payable in 20 - 25 years. The rice will be monetized by the NFA.

The first shipment of 47,000 MT on board MV Liberty Star berthed at the Subic Port. As January 20, 2003, more than 10,000 MT of this volume had already been discharged, Yap cited.

The next vessel carrying 5,512 MT is expected to dock at the Manila port on February 2. This will be followed by MV Liberty Sun with 47,103 MT to berth at the port of Batangas. Completing the shipments are two more vessels, MV National Dignity and Falcon Container, with 15,467 MT and 2,850 MT respectively, scheduled to arrive at the port of Manila within the month.

Yap also assured that with the government's inventory of both local and imported stocks, backed up by commercial and household stocks, the country's food security is ensured.

"We remain pro-active in the management of our rice supply and prices. Our goal is to make rice available at affordable prices at all times and under whatever circumstances. That's why we always maintain a safe and stable buffer stock of our main staple," Yap said.

For suggestions, queries or complaints, the public may text NFA via cellular phone no. 0917-6210927

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The First Death Anniversary Of
Our Dearly Beloved

RUPERTO R. CONSUNJI

Who passed away last April 03, 2003

Holy masses for Papa's Eternal Peace and Happiness will be offered at the following churches TOMORROW, April 03, 2004:

Mt. Carmel Church	6 a.m., 7 a.m., 6 p.m.
Sto. Niño Church, Pandacan	6:30 a.m.
Sta. Maria Goretti Parish Church, Pope Pius Center	9 a.m.
Christ the King Parish, Green Meadows, Q.C.	6 a.m., 7 a.m., 6 p.m.
Sta. Maria della Strada, Katipunan, Q.C.	6 a.m., 6 p.m.
Sanctuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati	7:30 a.m.
Sto. Niño de Paz, Greenbelt Chapel, Ayala Center	6 p.m.
Sanctuario de San Jose, Greenhills, Mandaluyong	6:15 p.m.
Mary the Queen Parish, Greenhills, M.M.	6 p.m.
St. Francis Parish Church, Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong	6 a.m., 7 a.m., 6 p.m.
Balanga Cathedral	6:30 a.m.

We love you, Papa, You were and forever will be in our hearts.

CARMEN ELLA KEIL LONTOC

Peacefully joined our Creator on March 31, 2004.

Her loving husband **FEDERICO MARIÑO LONTOC** (†); children **CELY** and **NANDING REYES**, **ROSE** and **REM GOPEZ**, **MELY** and **TOMAS TESTA, JR.** (†); **BABBIE SUMMA**, **FRED** and **BARBARA**, **GING** and **MICHEL ROY**; grandchildren and great-grandchildren request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Holy Family Chapel, Mt. Carmel Church in Broadway, New Manila, Quezon City. Daily Masses will be at 8:00 p.m.

Interment will be at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina on Sunday, April 4, 2004 after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

DEATH NOTICE

REYNALDO B. LUARCA

of Calapan, Oriental Mindoro

Peacefully joined our Creator on March 31, 2004, at the age of 70.

His body lies in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will be on April 4, 2004.

I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

John 14:6

LIU CHUAN YEK
(THOMAS LIU)

Peacefully joined his Creator on March 29, 2004 at the age of 67.

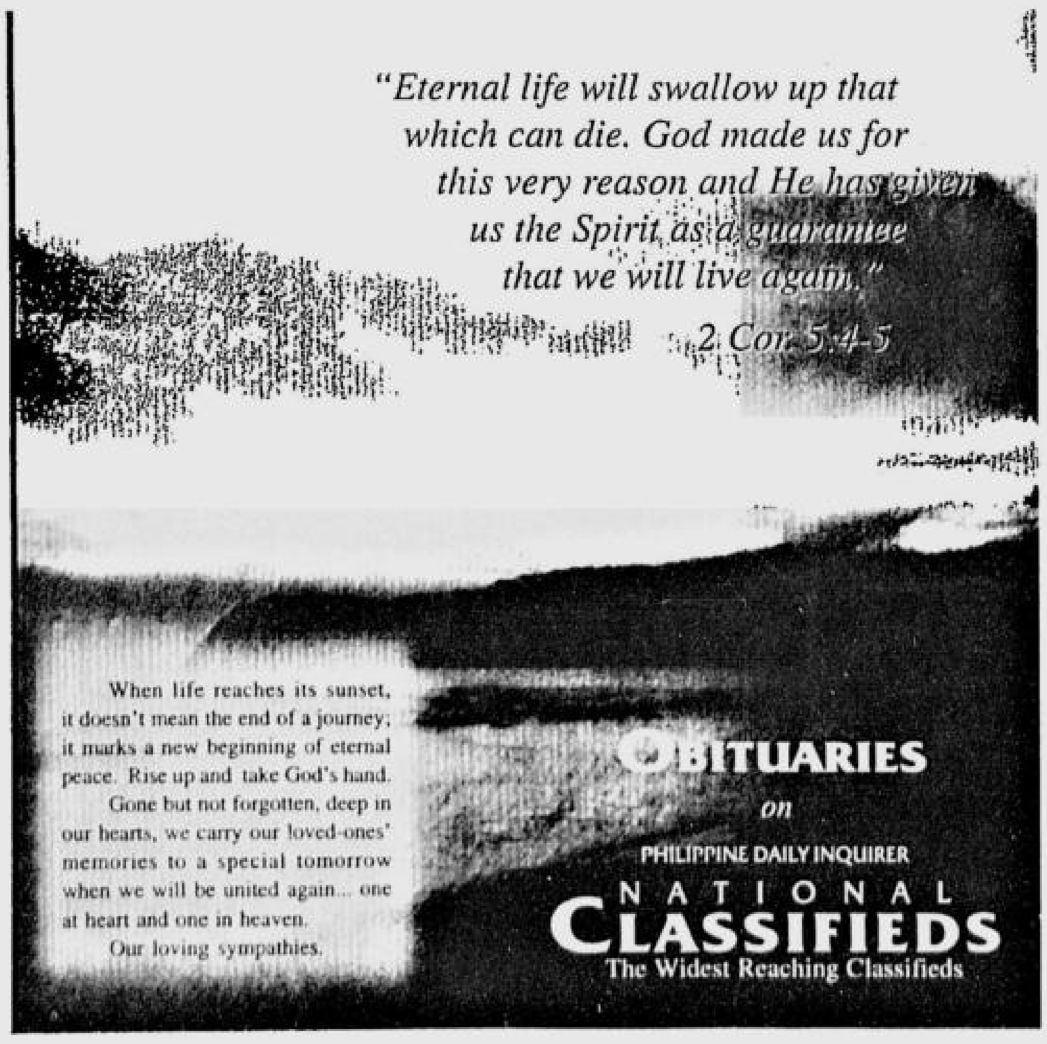
His bereaved wife **Consuelo (Conchita)**, children **Kenneth**, **Kathryn** and **Stanley**, **Kerrwin** and **Marielyn**, **Karolyn** and **Allan**; grandchildren **Alvin**, **Albert**, **Aileen**, **Kerk Mykel**, **Merrill**, **Robin Andrew**, **Jasmine Kate** and other relatives request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Inc., Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on Tuesday, April 6, 2004 at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque at 1:00 p.m.

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

Matthew 10:39



"Eternal life will swallow up that which can die. God made us for this very reason and He has given us the Spirit as a guarantee that we will live again."

2 Cor. 5:4-5

When life reaches its sunset, it doesn't mean the end of a journey; it marks a new beginning of eternal peace. Rise up and take God's hand.

Gone but not forgotten, deep in our hearts, we carry our loved-ones' memories to a special tomorrow when we will be united again... one at heart and one in heaven.

Our loving sympathies.

OBITUARIES on PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER NATIONAL CLASSIFIEDS
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ARCHIMEDES NICHOLAS (Archie) V. SIOSON

(Member of Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra)

Joined his Creator on March 23, 2004 at the age of 47.

His bereaved wife **Catherine (Peachy) Capulong Sioson**, daughter of **Mr. Benigno T. Capulong** and **Mrs. Imelda S.O. Capulong**; parents **Mr. Dionisio R. Sioson** (†) and **Mrs. Donidea V. Sioson**; sister **Mrs. Bernica (Bernie) Tuason**; brother-in-law **Mr. Ignacio (Igi) Tuason**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Funeraria Paz situated at 143 G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City with tel. nos. 712-30-01; 749-38-06.

Interment will be on April 7, 2004 (Wednesday) in San Bartolome Parish Catholic Cemetery, Malabon City after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

Our Dearly Beloved Papa

ATTY. ARTEMIO A. ALEJO
(Ret. Colonel)

Peacefully joined our Lord on the 30th of March 2004 at the age of 87.

He is survived by his wife **Corazon**; children **Ching** (†) and **Danny Dacumos**, **Ping** and **Isagani** (†) **Faylona**, **Butch** and **Cynthia**; grandchildren **Chiqui**, **Dodie** and **Jamie Dacumos**, **Sherrie Faylona**, **Missy** and **Lauren Alejo**; brothers and sisters **Nena Oreta**, **Mely Bautista**, **Ben** (†) & **Helen**, **Gener** and **Minia**, **Lucy** (†) and **Baby**, **Clarita** (†), **Paquito** (†) and **Baby**, **Pepe** and **Mely**, **Ramon** and **Inday**, **Rufo** and **Nita Villafuerte**. Relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Premier Chapel C, Christ the King Church, Greenmeadows, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, April 4, 2004 at Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat Road, Parañaque after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

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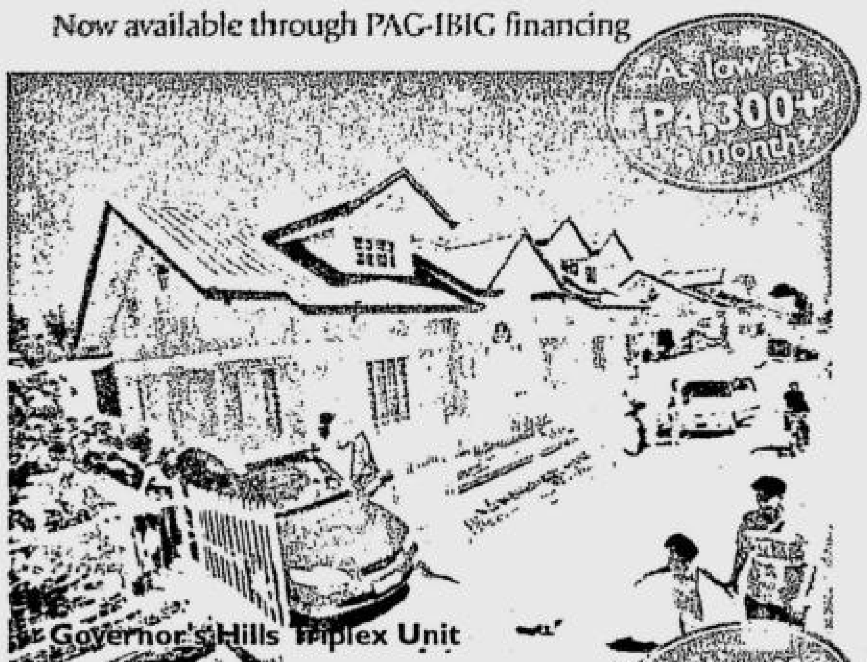

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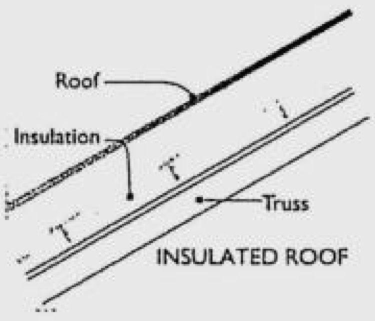

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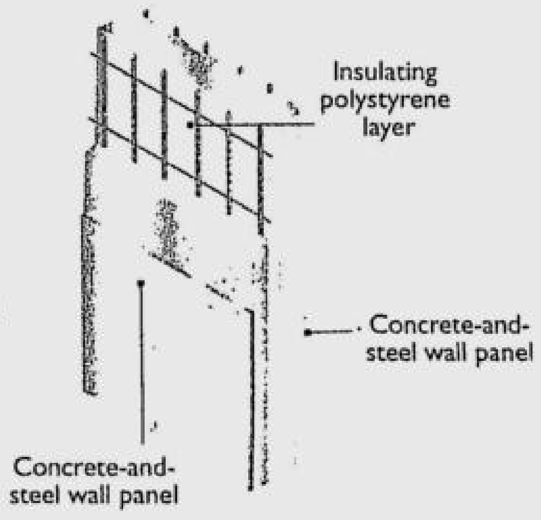
Insulating polystyrene layer
Concrete-and-steel wall panel
Concrete-and-steel wall panel

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Empire East SUNTRUST has put its energy-saving expertise to work on its ongoing large-scale community housing projects.

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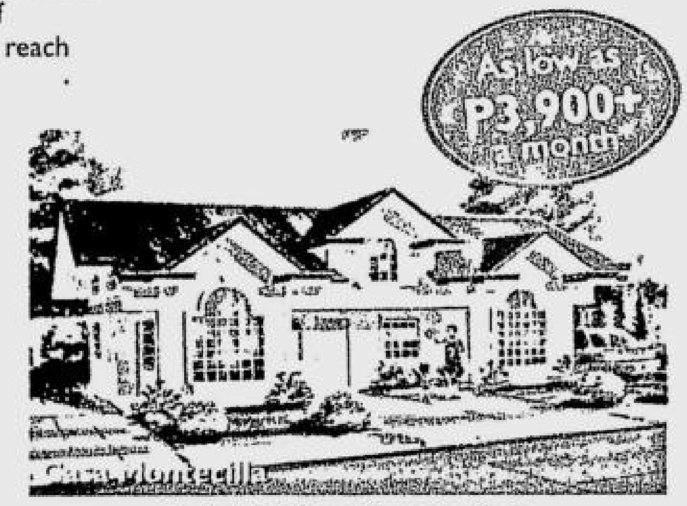
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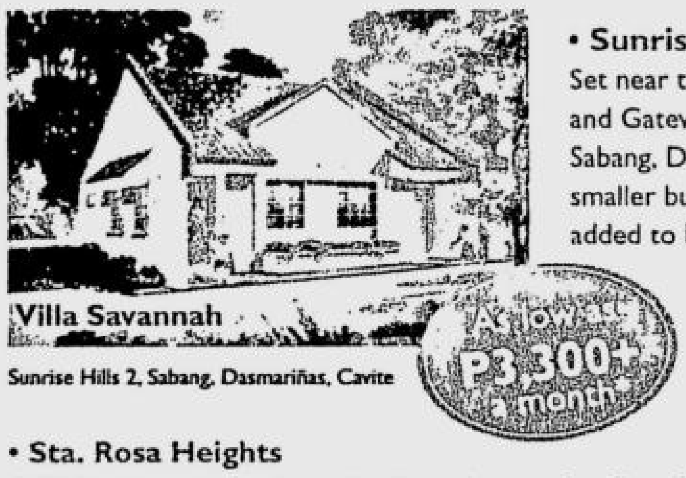
- **Sunrise Hills**
Set near top industrial zones such as the First Cavite Industrial Estate and Gateway Business Park, Sunrise Hills boasts a choice location in Sabang, Dasmariñas, Cavite. It offers triplex homes in Phase 1 and slightly smaller but more affordable homes in Phase 2. A mezzanine level can be added to both types of units for additional floor space.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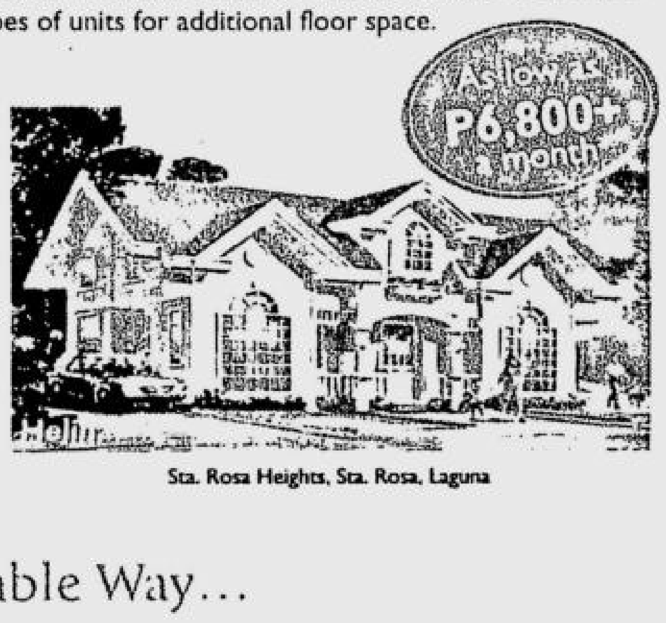
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Editor **Louie C. Camino**

Dolphy, ABS-CBN 'icon,' stars in new station ID

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

DOLPHY is the ABS-CBN icon. He embodies the 'Kapamilya' spirit."

This was how ABS-CBN vice president for creative commercial management Cindy de la Cruz explained the importance of the comedy king to the network, which shot its station ID on Wednesday, featuring Dolphy, among other ABS-CBN contract stars.

"He will always end the spot, as with all the materials that we've done before," De la Cruz told INQUIRER Entertainment when it visited the shoot last Wednesday. "*Si Tito* Dolphy *naman talaga ang* icon *ng* ABS-CBN (Dolphy is really the ABS-CBN icon)."

The new station ID is called "Sabay Summer Tayo Kapamilya."

Dutiful Dolphy

Dolphy showed up for the shoot about three hours late. But he dutifully taped for the ID amid reports that his sitcom "Home Along Da Airport" would soon be canceled because of his support for presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr.

ABS-CBN is said to be backing up President Macapagal-Arroyo and her running mate, Sen. Noli de Castro, an ABS-CBN newsroom talent, in the presidential election.

The shoot was held at a basketball station in España, Manila.

"We're 80 percent finished," De la Cruz said of the station ID.

Charlene Gonzalez, Aubrey Miles, Bernard Palanca and Rica Peralejo, who are hosts of several ABS-CBN shows, finished shooting their segments early in the morning, according to De La Cruz.

Maricel Soriano and Cesar Montano, stars of the sitcom "Bida si Mister, Bida si Misis," finished their parts in the afternoon, she added.

Police security

Wearing a bright yellow shirt, cap and rubber shoes, Dolphy arrived on the set at around 6 p.m. and was the last artist to shoot for the day, said director Aureus Solito.

With his arrival, about 10 uniformed policemen blocked fans from approaching the comedian and secured the perimeter of the location shoot.

Despite the tight security, Dolphy looked like he was approachable, ever the father figure to at least three generations of television and movie audiences. He also seemed to be having fun during the shoot, INQUIRER Entertainment observed.

Vandolph, Dolphy's son with actress Alma Moreno, came and left hours before his father arrived on the set.

But he made the most of the shoot even if his portion was done under the heat of the afternoon sun. Vandolph really played with the children, sweating profusely, but having fun.

Games children play

"This summer, we want to highlight Filipino street games," said De la Cruz, explaining the ID's concept. "Kids nowadays like playing with computer games or the Play Station."

In the station ID, ABS-CBN talents are shown interacting with the kids in the community, said De la Cruz.

"You'll see John Lloyd (Cruz) and Bea (Alonzo) playing *piko* (hopscotch), Kuh Ledesma engaged in 'jack en poy' with a kid, and the stars of 'Sanay Wala Nang Wakas' in a game of *patintero* (tag)," she said.

TV host Boy Abunda had fun with Chinese garter, Gary Valenciano played *sipa*, "Okay, Fine, Whatever" stars Aga Muhlach and Edu Manzano relived their childhood with a game of *teks* (picture cards).

But Gary looked awkward at first as he tried to toss the *sipa* with his foot. He only looked at ease with the game after he was told to do it "the Gary V style."

Abunda also posed gamely for pictures with the children and their mothers. The affable host of the show biz talk show "The Buzz" also signed autographs for the kibitzers.

"These are the games that we enjoyed as kids," said De la Cruz. "When we were brainstorming, *bumalik kami sa pagkabata* (we went back to our childhood). We want to share this experience with the viewers."

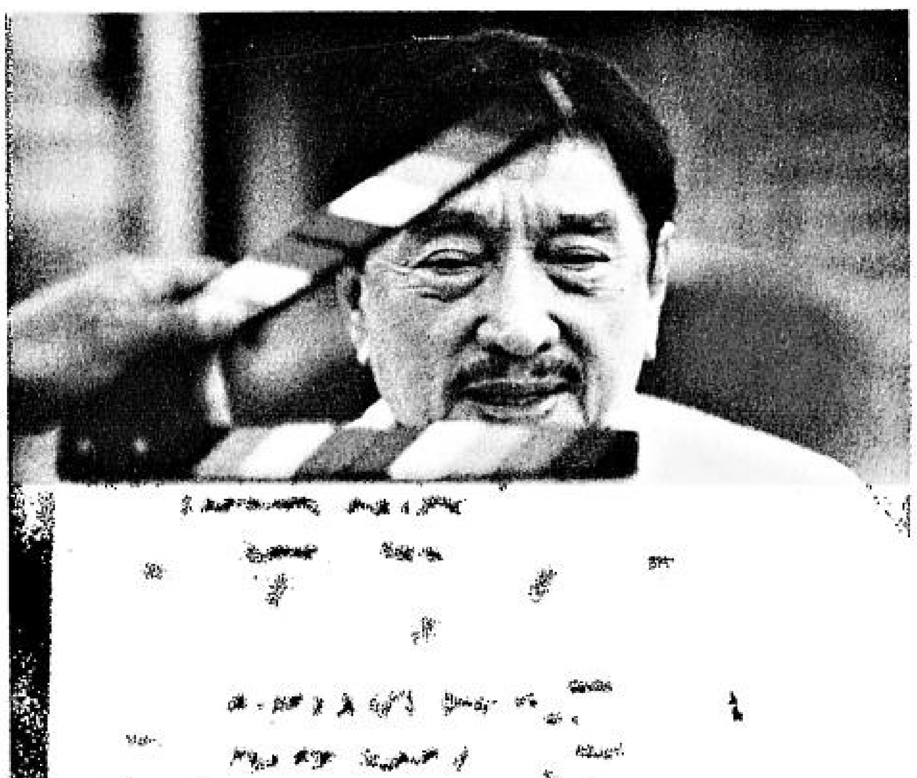
Interacting with stars

De la Cruz said the children included in the station ID underwent workshops on blocking and "how to interact with the stars."

"The station ID encourages companionship and camaraderie," she explained further. "*Sabay tayo* (let's do it together) in whatever we do. We enjoy these particular games with friends, not by ourselves."

"Sabay Summer Tayo Kapamilya" will air on April 4 in "Asap Mania," on Studio 23 and in all ABS-CBN channels, according to De la Cruz.

To celebrate the 10th anniversary of The Filipino Channel (TFC), "Asap Mania" will also be aired from the San Francisco Cow Palace in Los Angeles.

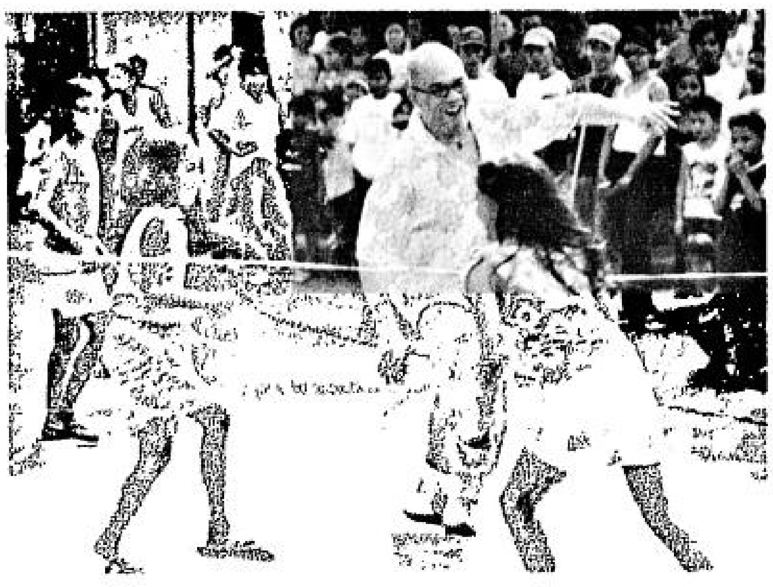


THE DUTIFUL Dolphy. Amid rumors of bad blood between him and ABS-CBN, the station ID shows he is still 'kapamilya.'

GARY Valenciano in an awkward stance as he tries to master the game of 'sipa.'

VANDOLPH has fun with the children, even if he missed his dad Dolphy, who arrived on the set three hours late.

EDU Manzano and Aga Muhlach relive their childhood in this game of 'teks.'



BOY Abunda doesn't miss a beat in this game of Chinese garter.

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2 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
3 THE MISSING
4 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST

G4 GLORIETTA 4
1 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
2 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
THX 3 GUARANTEED SEATS THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
4 DON'T TEMPT ME
5 SCOOBY DOO
6 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
7 50 FIRST DATES

GB1 GREENBELT 1
1 Art Film THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
2 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
REPERTORY'S DRACULA
April 2, 3 & 4

GB3 GREENBELT 3
THX 1 GUARANTEED SEATS THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
THX 2 GUARANTEED SEATS THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
3 GUARANTEED SEATS THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
4 LOVE ACTUALLY
THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
5 GUARANTEED SEATS 50 FIRST DATES
THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST

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THX 1 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
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5 PASSION OF THE CHRIST
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7 HAUSE OF THE DEAD
8 OTSO OTSO
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3 PASSION OF THE CHRIST
4 SCOOBY DOO

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2 PASSION OF THE CHRIST
3 KARIBA

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1 KASIPING
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3
4

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6
7
8
9

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2 OTSO OTSO
3 SCOOBY DOO-2
4 PASSION OF THE CHRIST
5 HOUSE OF THE DEAD
6 PASSION OF THE CHRIST
7 GRUDGE-2
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9 HIGHWAY MEN

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2
3
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5

Gotesco Ortigas
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2 OTSO OTSO
3 HOUSE OF THE DEAD
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5 SCOOBY DOO

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3 HOUSE OF THE DEAD
4

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SUPER CINERAMA
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1 PASSION OF THE CHRIST
2 HIGHWAY MEN
3 KARIBAL
4 HOUSE OF THE DEAD
5 RESERVE

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1 PASSION OF CHRIST
2 OTSO OTSO

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MALL CINEPLEX
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3 PASSION OF CHRIST
4 PASSION OF CHRIST
5 HOUSE OF THE DEAD
6 HIGHWAY MEN
7 OTSO OTSO

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 PASSION OF CHRIST
2 PASSION OF CHRIST
3 50 FIRST DATE
4 BUTTERFLY EFFECTS

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121
1 50 FIRST DATE
2 PASSION OF CHRIST
3 SCOOBY DOO 2
4 PASSION OF CHRIST

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 OTSO OTSO
2 THE CURSE
3 CHEAPER BY THE DOOZEN
4 TORQUE

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa, Laguna) tel (049) 837.0926
1 PASSION OF CHRIST
2 HIDALGO
3 GRUDGE-2

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 GRUDGE-2
2 HIDALGO
3 PASSION OF CHRIST
4 PASSION OF CHRIST

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
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1 THE GRUDGE-2
2 PASSION OF CHRIST
3 PASSION OF CHRIST
4 HIDALGO

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
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2 OTSO OTSO
3 TORQUE

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 50 FIRST DATE
2 OTSO OTSO
3 WATER DEMON
4 LOVE ACTUALLY

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795-3320
1 SCOOBY DOO-2
2 OTSO OTSO
3 50 FIRST DATE

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 SORUM
2 KASIPING
3 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
4 DEATH CURSE

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 HIDALGO
2 KASIPING
3 PASSION OF CHRIST
4 GRUDGE-2
5 THE CURSE

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 PASSION OF CHRIST
2 KASIPING

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558
1 PASSION OF CHRIST
2 GHOST HOUSE
3 KASIPING

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283
1 HAUNTED OFFICE
2 KARIBAL
3 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
4 OTSO OTSO

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel 520.8914
1 RESERVE

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 KARIBAL
2 50 FIRST DATE
3 BUTTERFLY EFFECTS
4 OTSO OTSO

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657
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2 TORQUE

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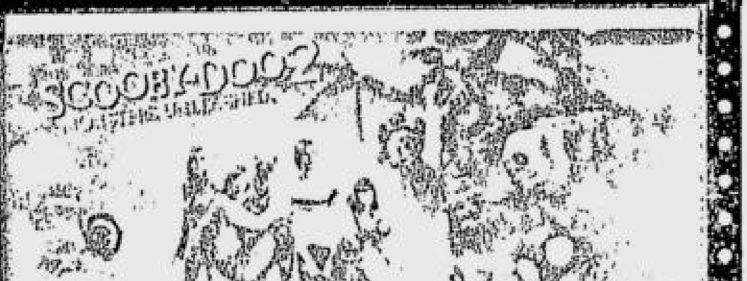

1,500 to lose jobs in EMI

LONDON—Music giant EMI will cut 1,500 jobs, axe one fifth of its recording artists, and stop making its own CDs and DVDs in Europe and the United States in a bid to cut costs, the British firm said on Wednesday.

The world's third largest music company, home to the Rolling Stones, Coldplay and Norah Jones, also said recorded music sales in the year to end-March 2004 held close to the previous year's levels amid rampant digital piracy and competition from other entertainment.

Its shares were up 5.9 percent at 272-1/2 pence by 0813 GMT.

Investec analyst Kingsley Wilson said EMI's outsourcing of its manufacturing in Europe and the United States was "long awaited" and the company's nearly flat annual sales represented "a significant outperformance of the market."

EMI forecast savings of at least 50 million pounds ($92 million) a year from the cost-cutting plan.

"The time is right to further reposition EMI Music. Exiting manufacturing in our two primary regions of Europe and the US will allow us to lower our costs while flexibly meeting our supply needs," said EMI Music's chairman Alain Levy.

Niche and underperforming artists would go, EMI said, but refused to give names.

Downsizing

The company said it would take a cash charge of 75 million pounds and a non-cash charge of around 80 million, tied to writedowns and its downsized artists roster, in 2003/2004.

In transferring its Dutch CD and DVD plant to local manufacturer MediaMotion, it netted only a nominal sales fee but received considerations in MediaMotion's agreement to supply CDs and DVDs. EMI's US manufacturing plant in Jacksonville, Illinois, will be closed.

In recent years EMI has seen two merger attempts blocked by regulators, one with Warner Music and one with Bertelsmann's music arm BMG. Last year it bowed out of the race for Time Warner Inc.'s music business.

The culling of its artist roster could cause EMI to drop in the ranks of the world's largest music companies. The dropped artists represent "a low single digit percentage" of EMI's total music volume, the company said.

EMI also announced it had acquired the remaining 20 percent of Berry Gordy's Jobete song catalogue, which includes Motown classics such as "I Heard It Through the Grapevine," for about $80 million.
Reuters

Multimedia courses start April 19

DIRECTOR Peque Gallaga's brainchild, Negros Summer Workshops, based in De La Salle University's Bacolod City campus, will start its sessions on April 19 with the flagship acting course "Being—No Acting Please."

The acting session will be conducted by acting coach Gabby Fernandez, who will also be on top of sessions on "Videography and Storytelling with the Camera" and "Hairstyling for Film, TV and Stage."

Other courses are Director's Apprenticeship, which will be handled by Gallaga, Basic Acting, Acting for Children, Teen Acting, Film Production, Advanced Acting and Makeup for Film, TV and Stage.

This year's instructors include Gallaga, Lore Reyes, Gabby Fernandez, Alf Alacapa, Ma. Isabell Urra, Manny Montelibano, Rene Hinojales, Malou Jacob, Manuela Benito, Jay Abello and Michelle Gallaga.

Some of the products and past instructors of the workshops are film and television directors Jerry Lopez-Sineneng, Jerome Pobocan, Don Escudero and Erik Matti, actors Joel Torre and Ian Veneracion, cinematographer Richard Padernal, production designers Rodell Cruz, Tats Rejante, Roy Lachica, Dwight Gaston and Jay Herrera, producer Madeleine Gallaga, screenwriters Elsa Martinez-Coscolluela, Bibeth Orteza and Raquel Villavicencio.

Workshop registration is until April 16 at the Office of the Artist-in-Residence, University of St. La Salle, Bacolod City. Call (034) 434-5998. Assistance for lodging arrangement for Non-Bacolod workshoppers is available upon request.

Araneta Center ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX

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Ali 4	PASSION OF THE CHRIST
Ali 5	HOUSE OF THE DEAD
Ali 6	HIGHWAYMEN
Ali 7	OTSO OTSO

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APR 9	OLPH RETREAT (7AM)/ SHALOM (1PM)
APR 10	OLPH RETREAT (7AM)/ SHALOM (2PM)
APR 11	PBA: FED EX VS. RED BULL
APR 13	NCA 7-COCK DERBY
APR 14	PBA: PUREFOODS VS. RED BULL
APR 15	NCA 7-COCK DERBY

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THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	KASIPING
B	CLOSED
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	OTSO OTSO
CINEMA-2	KARIBAL
CINEMA-3	MAGNIFICO
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	PASSION OF THE CHRIST
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	HAUNTED OFFICE
CINEMA-6	GRUDGE 2
CINEMA-7	TORQUE
CINEMA-8	HIGHWAYMEN
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	PASSION OF THE CHRIST
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	PASSION OR THE CHRIST
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	PASSION OF THE CHRIST
CINEMA-12	SCOOBY DOO 2
CINEMA-14	HOUSE OF THE DEAD
CINEMA-15	50 FIRST DATES

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

(LAS PINAS)	THE CURSE
CINEMA-1	OTSO OTSO
CINEMA-2	CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
CINEMA-4	DRAGONS' NINJA

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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RESERVED SEATING

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1	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30	PG-13
2	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00	PG-13
3	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	10:30, 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30	PG-13
4	SCOOBY-DOO 2	11:50, 1:55, 4:00 6:05, 8:10, 10:15	GP

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10:50, 1:30, 4:15, 7:00, 9:50
P13

CINEMA 2: **PASSION OF THE CHRIST**
11:20, 2:05, 4:50, 7:35, 10:30
P13

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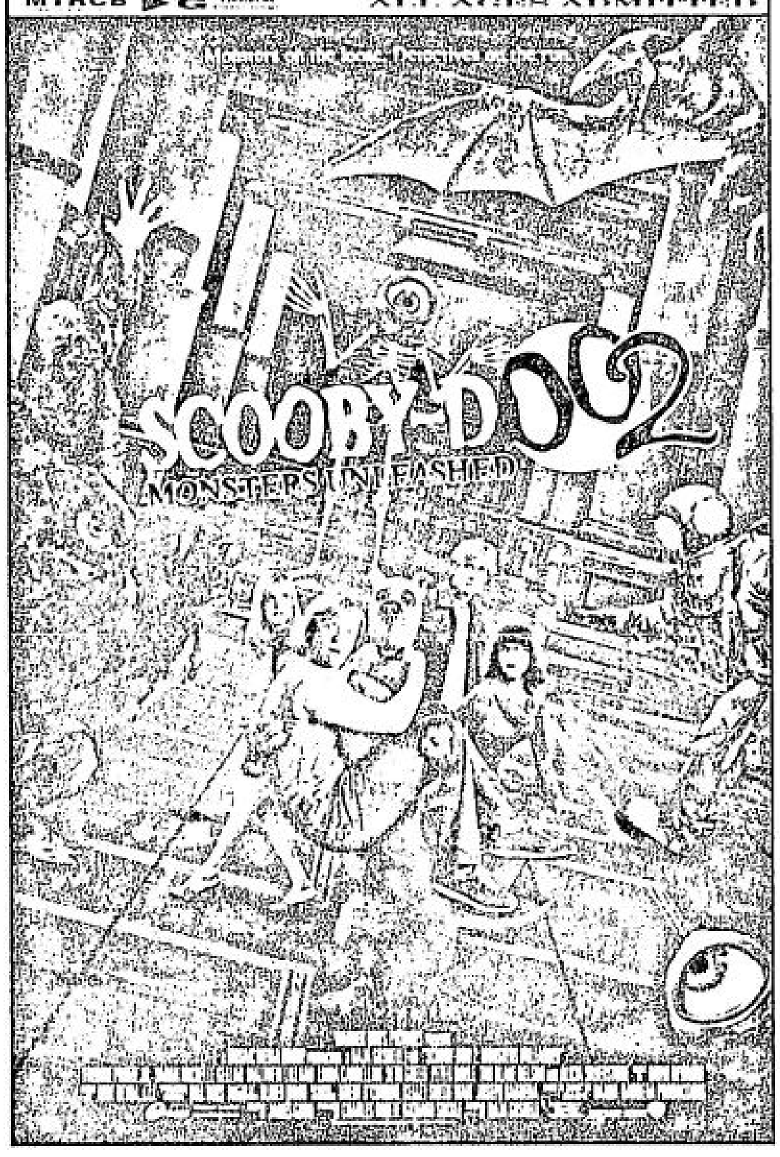

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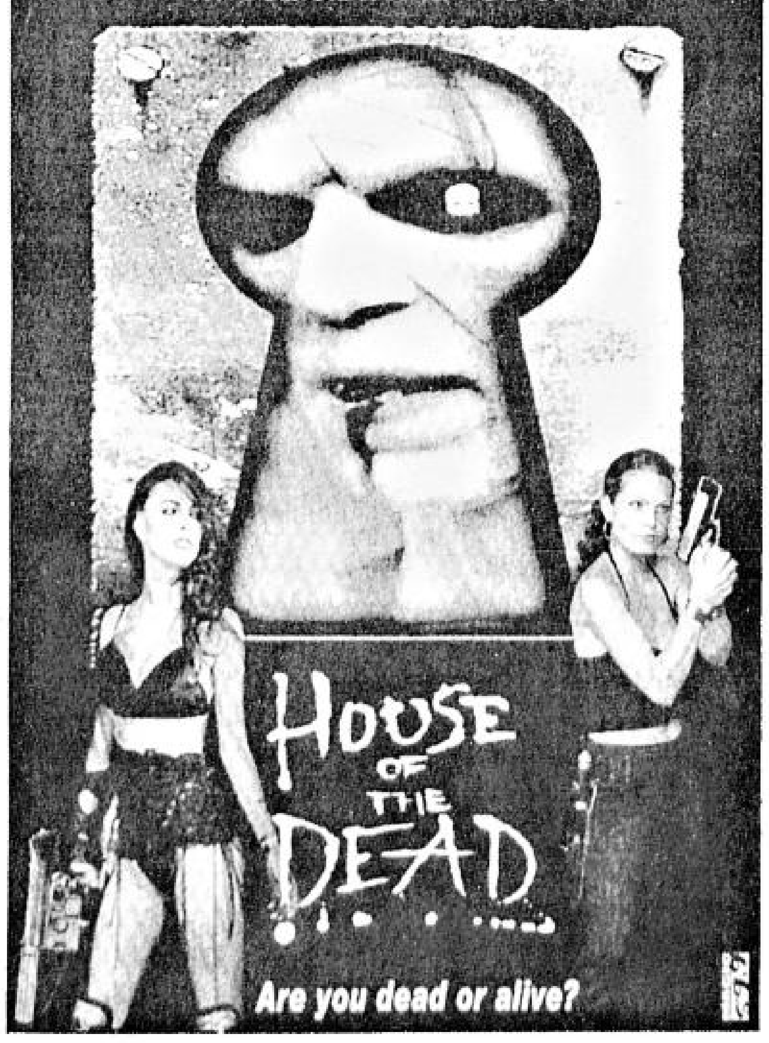
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2 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00	3 SCOOBY DOO 2 10:50, 1:00, 3:10, 5:20, 7:30, 9:40	4 50 FIRST DATES 11:10, 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00
5 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST 10:50, 1:30, 4:10, 6:50, 9:30	6 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST 12:30, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00	7 DON'T TEMPT ME 11:55, 2:05, 4:15, 6:25, 8:35, 10:30
8 LOVE ACTUALLY 10:40, 1:25, 4:10, 6:55, 9:40	9 HOUSE OF THE DEAD 10:50, 1:00, 3:10, 5:20, 7:30	10 THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT 11:55, 2:05, 4:15, 6:25, 8:35, 10:30

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1 **THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST** 11:10, 1:50, 4:30, 7:10, 10:00

2 SCOOBY DOO 2 10:15, 12:10, 2:05, 4:00, 5:55, 7:50, 9:50	3 DON'T TEMPT ME 11:25, 1:35, 3:45, 5:55, 8:00, 10:00	4 HOUSE OF THE DEAD 11:05, 1:10, 3:15, 5:20, 7:45, 9:40
5 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST 10:30, 1:10, 3:50, 6:30, 9:20,	6 50 FIRST DATES 10:50, 1:00, 3:10, 5:20, 7:30, 9:50	7 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST 10:30, 1:10, 3:50, 6:30, 9:20

Big R Supercenter METRO EAST

682-8193/99 / 682-8280

1 **HOUSE OF THE DEAD** 11:50, 2:10, 4:30, 6:50, 9:10

2 **THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST** 10:15, 1:20, 4:25, 7:30, 10:30

3 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST 10:15, 1:20, 4:25, 7:30, 10:30	4 50 FIRST DATES 10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00	5 SCOOBY DOO 2 10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00
6 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST 10:15, 1:50, 4:55, 8:00	7 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST 10:15, 1:50, 4:55, 8:00	8 OTSO-OTSO 11:00, 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00

Big R Supercenter NOVALICHES / FAIRVIEW

935-3229 / 31

1 **THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST** 10:10, 12:50, 3:30, 6:10, 8:50

2 **THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST** 10:10, 12:50, 3:30, 6:10, 8:50

3 HOUSE OF THE DEAD 12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8:00	4 THE GRUDGE 2 12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8:00	5 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST 11:30, 2:10, 4:50, 7:30
6 SCOOBY DOO 2 11:25, 1:15, 3:05, 4:55, 6:45, 8:35	7 50 FIRST DATES 11:25, 1:15, 3:05, 4:55, 6:45, 8:35	8 OTSO-OTSO 11:45, 1:55, 4:05, 6:15, 8:30

Citisquare MALABON 288-0985/2575	big Supercenter CAINTA 240-4661	Big R Supercenter STA. ROSA Laguna (049)837-0907
1 SCOOBY DOO 2	1 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	1 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
2 OTSO-OTSO	2 OTSO-OTSO	2 THE CURSE
3 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	3 SCOOBY DOO 2	3 SCOOBY DOO 2
4 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	4 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	4 THE GRUDGE 2
		5 HIDALGO

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2 OTSO-OTSO	2 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	2 THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT
3 THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT	3 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	3 SCOOBY DOO 2
4 KARIBAL	4 OTSO-OTSO	4 THE NIGHTMARE
5 SCOOBY DOO 2	5 50 FIRST DATES	5 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
		6 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST THX

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1 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	1 TORQUE	1 TORQUE
2 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	2 HIDALGO	2 GOTHIKA
3 SCOOBY DOO 2	3 LOVE ACTUALLY	3 LOVE ACTUALLY
4 HOUSE OF THE DEAD	4 GOTHIKA	4 THE NIGHTMARE
5 OTSO-OTSO	5 SCOOBY DOO 2	5 BONE SNATCHER
6 HIGHWAYMEN	6 OTSO-OTSO	6 SCOOBY DOO 2

THE PASSION

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ALDEGUER SISTERS

Still kicking, head-throwing after 30 years

By Janet and Ruben Nepales
LA Correspondents

THE ALDEGUER sisters, Terri and Lally, have not lost the spunk and the moves that made them popular in the '70s.
JANET R. NEPALES

HOLLYWOOD—After 30 years, the Aldeguer sisters and their choreographic signature head throw are still around.

It seemed only like last week when the sisters, clad in sequined, pleated white palazzos were introducing their trademark head throw to the martial law generation.

Last Thursday, sisters Terri and Lally Aldequer, with the gleaming white teeth and perfectly groomed black tresses, celebrated their 30th anniversary in show business in the hotel ballroom where the very first Academy Awards were handed out.

They had something more tangible to celebrate at the Blossom Ballroom of the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel than their head toss. The sisters turned the celebration into a showcase for the students at their Aldeguer Sisters Performing Arts Center.

Big decision

In 2000, shortly after they made the big decision to immigrate to the US, the sisters started the school of dance and drama in the Los Angeles suburb of West Covina.

In similar-black and silver gowns, Terri and Laly, still looking pretty and lithe after all these years, arrived to applause from guests having cocktails outside the ballroom.

"We are looking forward to another 30 years!" Laly gushed to the INQUIRER Entertainment. "We have a long way to go."

For her, the best part of the past three decades was "to go on trips to different countries and represent the Philippines."

For Terri, "It was the greatest pleasure to be given a chance to dance before people from all walks of life—kings, queens, soldiers, prisoners, and so on. Not everybody is given that opportunity."

What keeps the sibling team going "are the children (their students) and the dancing."

When we asked to do their head throw for nostalgia's sake during the show, the sisters laughed.

"We're going to give it to you!" Terri promised.

Among the guests waiting excitedly for the tribute and talent show to begin were Jimmy and Millie Cunanan, whose sultry daughter, Ivory, is enrolled at the sisters' performing arts school. Jimmy told us that he admired the Aldeguers for running their school "with their heart, not from a purely business viewpoint."

He is grateful that Terri and Laly filled a void for a school that trains Filipino-American youths like Ivory who are inclined toward the performing arts.

The bubbly sisters might or might not produce the next Lea Salonga or the next American idol at their school. But their students all carry themselves with poise and confidence onstage. In past Fil-Am shows, especially in one staged recently by publisher and impresario Tony Vizmonte, talents of the Aldeguer sisters stood out among the rest because of how they projected themselves onstage.

IVORY Cunanan, one of the Aldeguers' students, performs "All That Jazz" as a tribute to the sisters.

For some parents, the acquired confidence of their offspring was reason enough to toast the perpetually smiling sisters that evening. Matt Virola said of his son, Josh, one of the performers: "He has become more sociable unlike before when he was so timid. He is more outgoing these days."

Jun Banares, whose two sons, EJ and BB are both enrolled, agreed. (We have watched the brothers do a version of "The Prayer," the Celine Dione-Andrea Bocelli duet, with the younger EJ, 11, doing the soaring Dion vocals—just picture that.)

"My oldest son was very timid," Jun remarked. "Now he's doing very well."

Jerry and Renie Parayno echoed the same sentiments.

"Our daughter Genie used to be shy," Renie told us. "Now, she's more outgoing and has become a lot friendlier."

High kicks, winning smiles

Under the elaborate ceiling of the Blossom Ballroom where the first Oscar Awards dinner was held in 1929, the show commenced. Ivory, Josh, EJ, BB and Genie sang and danced in a succession of numbers that also featured Colleen Campos (an "American Idol Junior" semifinalist), Michelle de la Merced, Melissa Reyes, Stephanie Mace, Kevin Gino, Jaclyn Balacy, Dubhe Ferrer, Sarah Lazatin and Jonathan Bangloy.

Cunanan performed "All That Jazz" with dancers who evoked class and charm: Criselda Valderrama, Louanna Delfino, Nicole Jabson and Nikki Hoffman.

Then, to the familiar opening strains of "Shaft" (what tune could be more apt to an iconic dancing pair who debuted in the '70s?) Terri and Laly, in glittering caftan blouses, did those high kicks and head throws.

They flashed their winning, teeth-baring smiles, which they alternated with another Aldeguer trademark—the look of passion in their faces.

Was it just our perception or can we blame the MTV generation's more frenetic style of dancing that made us think that the Aldeguer Sisters danced slower than how we remembered their moves?

No matter what. The Aldeguer Sisters still danced with uncommon grace, style and the bright smiles that can still light up any stage today.

8-year-old wins LA trip from Nickelodeon

SAVANNAH See, 8, a prep student of Immaculate Conception Academy, won an all-expense paid trip for four persons to Los Angeles to attend Nickelodeon's 17th Kids' Choice Awards in Los Angeles, California, US, on Saturday.

She sent the winning answer to the question, "Who won favorite cartoon in the 2003 Kids' Choice Award?" Her answer: Spongebob Squarepants. Her entry was picked by Nickelodeon and Purefoods Tender Juicy Hotdog. Her prize includes a four-day, three-night hotel accommodation, exclusive invitations to the Welcome Party at Nick Animation Studios, a VIP tour of Universal Studios, exclusive tickets to the Kids' Choice Awards and post show party and $600 spending money.

The Nickelodeon's Kids' Choice Awards will be shown in the Philippines on Nickelodeon on June 6.

Hosting the even are Mike Myers and Cameron Diaz with OutKast and Avril Lavigne as guest performers.

On May 30, a local voting campaign and an on-ground sneak preview party will be held at the Glorietta Activity Center in Makati. Local celebrities will grace the event, which has Nick games, activity booths and cool prizes.

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SAVANNAH with Nickelodeon and Purefoods executives

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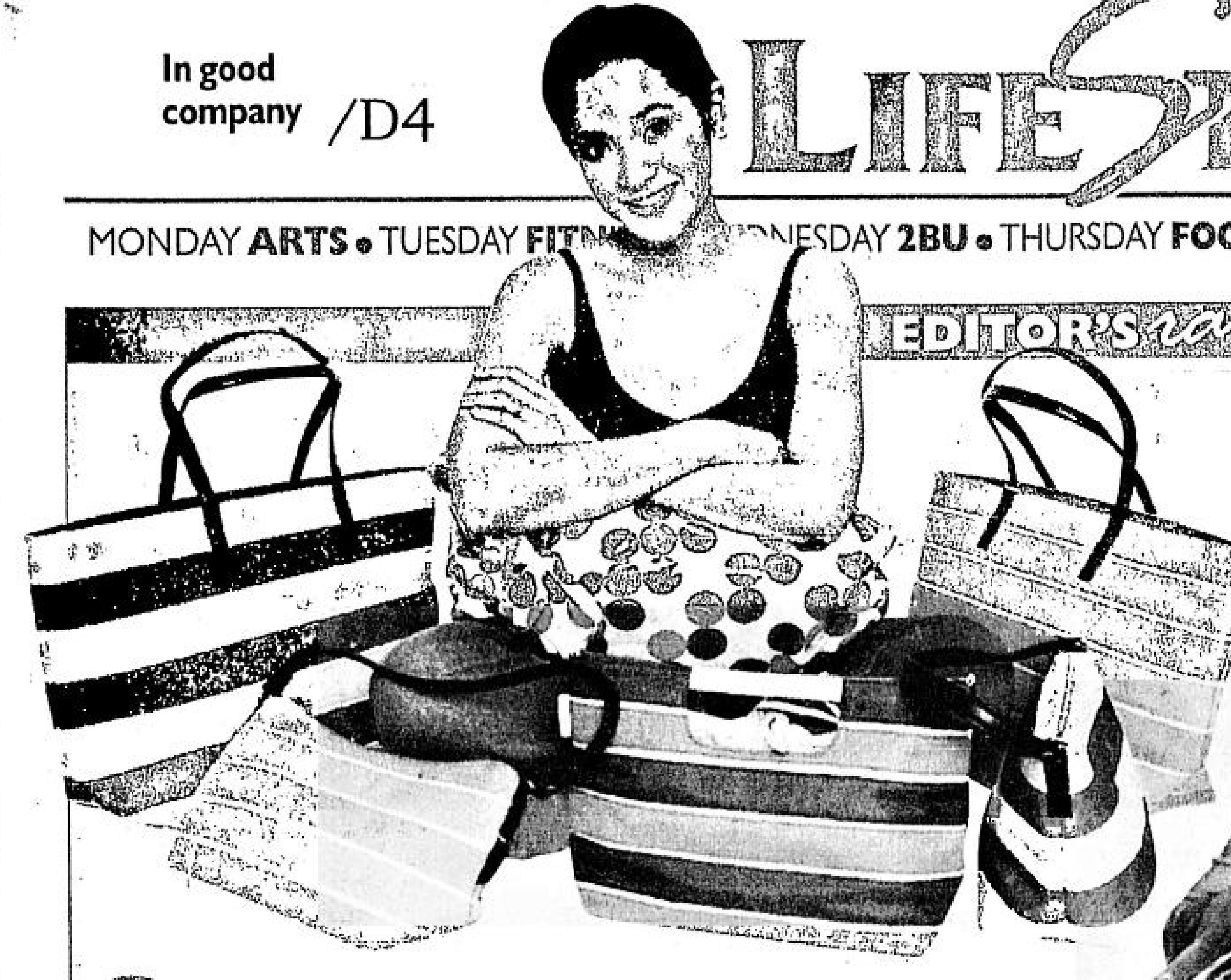
In good company /D4

LIFESTYLE

Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

MONDAY **ARTS** • TUESDAY **FIT**[illegible] **NESDAY 2BU** • THURSDAY **FOOD** • FRIDAY **FASHION/BEAUTY/HOME** • SUNDAY **SURPRISES**



EDITOR'S rave BOARD

Summer is in the (right) bag

WHAT makes a great summer bag? Colors so bright they reflect the sun's warm glow. Prints so charming they compete with nature—happy polka dots, refreshing florals, neat stripes. And, oh yes, size is very important. Whoever says size doesn't matter is lying. At least when it comes to summer bags it does. The bigger, the better.

I need to be able to stash in my summer bag a good pair of sunglasses (Guccis that are wide at the temples), a pair of reading spectacles (Dolce & Gabbana frames last forever), a sturdy Denman hairbrush, a small bottle of Alcogel (clean hands keep the colds away), a Braun Buffel wallet with matching coin-key purse (for someone like me who color-codes her hangers, they have to match), the bills I have to pay (or I'll forget to pay them), a small kit for tinted moisturizer, concealer and lipstick, a book or magazine, a fan, a hanky... everything one needs to stay cool, calm and disinfected when the temperature sizzles. When my kids were babies, there had to be room for feeding bottles too in my bag.

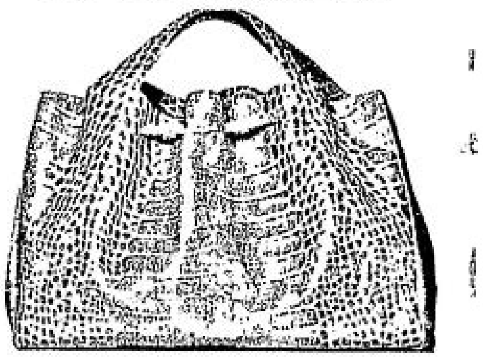
Lucky for shoppers like me who are "budgetarians," Segue has a collection that's right on the money. What I like about Segue is that a Pinay is in its design team. Her name is Mai Cojuangco (shown here wit h some Segue bags). She is daughter to Peping and Tingting, sister to Liaa, Mikee and China, future bride to Segue's managing director Andrea Zini—but let's not go there. She designed what's called the Daquiri collection of Segue and that's what's important here and now.

The new collection on display at the Segue stores in Glorietta 2 and SM Megamall, not to mention all Gift Gate stores nationwide, come in combinations of green, blue, pink, red, brown, etc. in cotton, the perfect summer fabric.

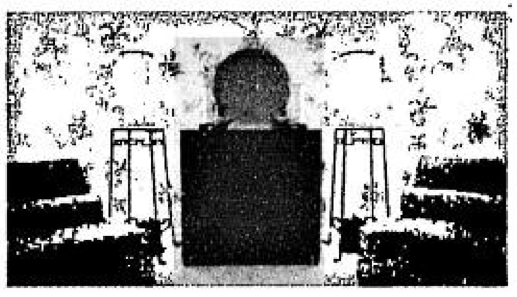
This may be the season for clothes bereft of color (white, beige, khaki) but that doesn't mean you have to be boring. By all means, get down, get wild, get crazy. Pick a bag of many colors.

CBF

IN THIS ISSUE

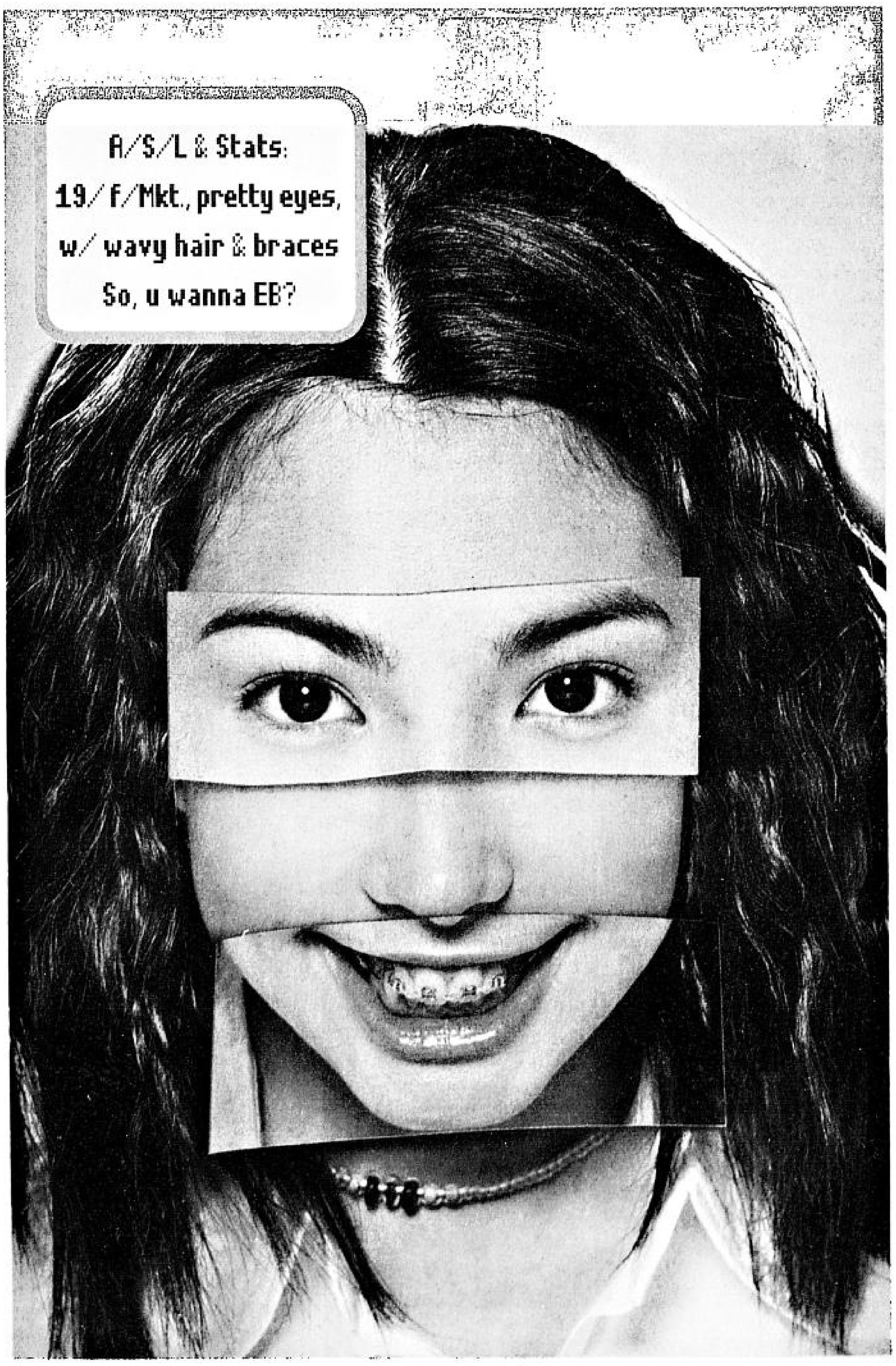


Kyoto and Palm Beach inspire Natori /F2



Home remodeled in record time /G1

Apples' tips on how to pack a suitcase /I1



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making great things possible Globe HANDYPHONE

Fashion ahoy!

ROBINSONS Department Store (RDS) keeps up with the season with outfits inspired by the sun and sea.

Beat the heat in cool and breezy nautical fashion in vibrant colors like blue, red, white and a lot of stripes.

Girls can sail away in flattering tube tops. They can spice up the look by layering. A white blouse, red tunic or baby tee are great choices and can be paired off with cool denims like sporty cargo capri, flared pants or denim mini skirt.

Accessories include funky hairclips, colorful drop earrings, and trendy flip flops and sandals. Wide and bright leather or garrison belts can complete the look.

A tote or roomy canvas bag in a vibrant hue is perfect for keeping things handy.

Boys can gear up for adventure in a classic sports shirt and crisp khakis or denim pants. For a laid-back style, a soft printed polo shirt over a white tee matched with soft denim pants or shorts may be just the thing.

Sunvisors are available in vivid shades. Comfy leather or rubber slippers can go with most things this season.

Mix and match and explore many styles this season at RDS—Julia for ladies' wear, bags and shoes; Portside for men's wear; Liberté for teens; and Footloose for slippers, among others.

Visit the RDS branch nearest you or go to www.rds.com.ph for more information.

ON HER: red tunic, tube top in black and white stripes and denim jeans from Liberté; shoes from Julia. **On him:** printed polo shirt, white tank top and denim jeans all from Portside; khaki visor and garrison belt from RDS

PRINTED polo shirt, yellow muscle shirt and blue board shorts, all from Portside; red and blue flip flops from Footloose; blue visor from RDS

NAVY blue tube top with white stripes and denim capri pants from Liberté; bag and shoes from Julia; earrings and red leather belt from RDS

PRINTED round-neck shirt, white long sleeves and cropped denim pants, all from Portside; red and blue flip flops from Footloose; blue garrison belt from RDS

Robinsons Supermarket
WOW! Low, low prices
COOL SUMMER FEST
April 2 - 15, 2004
WOW! Fresh for less
PUSIT LUMOT P165.00 /kg Reg. Price 180.00
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SAYOTE* P9.00 /kg Reg. Price 12.00
POTATO* Regular P27.00 /kg Reg. Price 30.00
YELLOW MANGO* P45.00 /kg Reg. Price 50.00
SQUID BALLS P110.00 /kg Reg. Price 120.00
VEGETABLE FISHBALLS P87.00 /kg Reg. Price 91.75
CRABSTICKS (Imported) P91.25 /pack Reg. Price 96.00
GOOD SAVERS Kaldereta Cut P140.00 /kg Reg. Price 160.00
MONTEREY Sinigang Cut P118.00 /kg Reg. Price 125.00
MONTEREY Breaded Pork Chop P156.00 /kg Reg. Price 170.00
SUPERSAVERS Frozen Chicken P69.00 /kg Reg. Price 84.00
FRESH PICK OF THE WEEK
BANGUS** LARGE P110.00 /kg Reg. Price 120.00
* Not available in Tutuban Center branch
** Not available in Tutuban Center and Malabon Citisquare branches
Get a chance to win one of five Panasonic Stand Fans in the weekly raffle draw and one of fifteen Condura Air Conditioners in the GRAND DRAW!
See flyers for details.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1332 Series of 2004
NOVA Cheddar 78g P7.75 each Reg. Price 8.25
PIATTOS Cheese 85g P7.75 each Reg. Price 8.25
CHIPPY BBQ 30g P3.90 each Reg. Price 4.25
PRINGLES Cheezum 191g/Original 195g/Sour Cream & Onion 190g P63.50 each Reg. Price 67.00
BREAD STIX Family 130g P10.60 each Reg. Price 11.00
CUBEE Choco & Cream 25g P4.50 each Reg. Price 5.00
FITA Singles 30g (10's) P22.25 /pack Reg. Price 24.00
SOL-O Choco Sandwich 10g (20's) P15.50 /pack Reg. Price 15.75
QUICKCHOW Instant Noodles Beef 55g P4.00 each Reg. Price 4.25
REFRESH Mineral Water 220ml P2.00 each Reg. Price 2.50
REFRESH Orange/Dalandan Drink 500g P32.00 each Reg. Price 34.00
COKE/SPRITE In Can 330 ml P12.75 each Reg. Price 13.50
COKE 1.5 L P26.00 each Reg. Price 28.25
PEPSI/PEPSI TWIST In Can (4's) 330ml P48.00 /pack Reg. Price 51.00
NESTEA Lemon Iced Tea 500g P52.50 each Reg. Price 57.75
DIET PEPSI / DIET PEPSI TWIST In Can (4's) 330ml P48.00 /pack Reg. Price 51.00
BEAR BRAND w/ Zinc 180g P33.00 each Reg. Price 34.75
TANG Single-Serve Orange 9g (24's) P69.00 /pack Reg. Price 73.25
ZESTO Iced Tea Calamansi 200ml P3.95 each Reg. Price 4.50
ABSOLUTE Distilled Water 350 ml P6.10 each Reg. Price 6.75
ZESTO Orange 200ml P4.00 each Reg. Price 4.25
ABSOLUTE Distilled Water 500 ml P8.50 each Reg. Price 9.75
ZESTO Mango 200ml P4.50 each Reg. Price 4.75
ABSOLUTE Distilled Water 6 L P46.00 each Reg. Price 52.00
TANG Ponkan / Lemon 500g P37.00 each Reg. Price 38.25
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1330 Series of 2004
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• Robinsons Place Manila • Robinsons Town Mall Los Baños • Metropolis Star Alabang • Circle C Center, Congressional • Nepo Mall, Angeles, Pampanga

Plus factors

FARO has launched a women's accessories line to complement its smart-casual fashion collection for plus-sizes. The line includes necklaces, bracelets and bags. The company plans to introduce, soon, sandals and underwear.

Faro clothes for women with full-figures use comfortable fabrics and vibrant colors and are designed to reflect the tastes of women in their mid-20s to mid-30s and feature mainly classical styling.

Faro recently opened their newest boutique at City Walk 2 in Eastwood City. Like its other shops, the new branch has a spacious floor area, uncluttered layout and warm lighting, with fitting rooms that are bright, airy and equipped with several large mirrors.

Faro has branches at Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Rustan's Tower, Rustan's Alabang, Rustan's Makati and City Walk 2 in Eastwood City.

SLEEK wedge sandals combine classic colors with bold designs.

LEATHER and faux-fur tote bags are essentials of any woman's wardrobe.

A BELL-SLEEVED lime-green blouse and cuffed denims make an attractive ensemble.

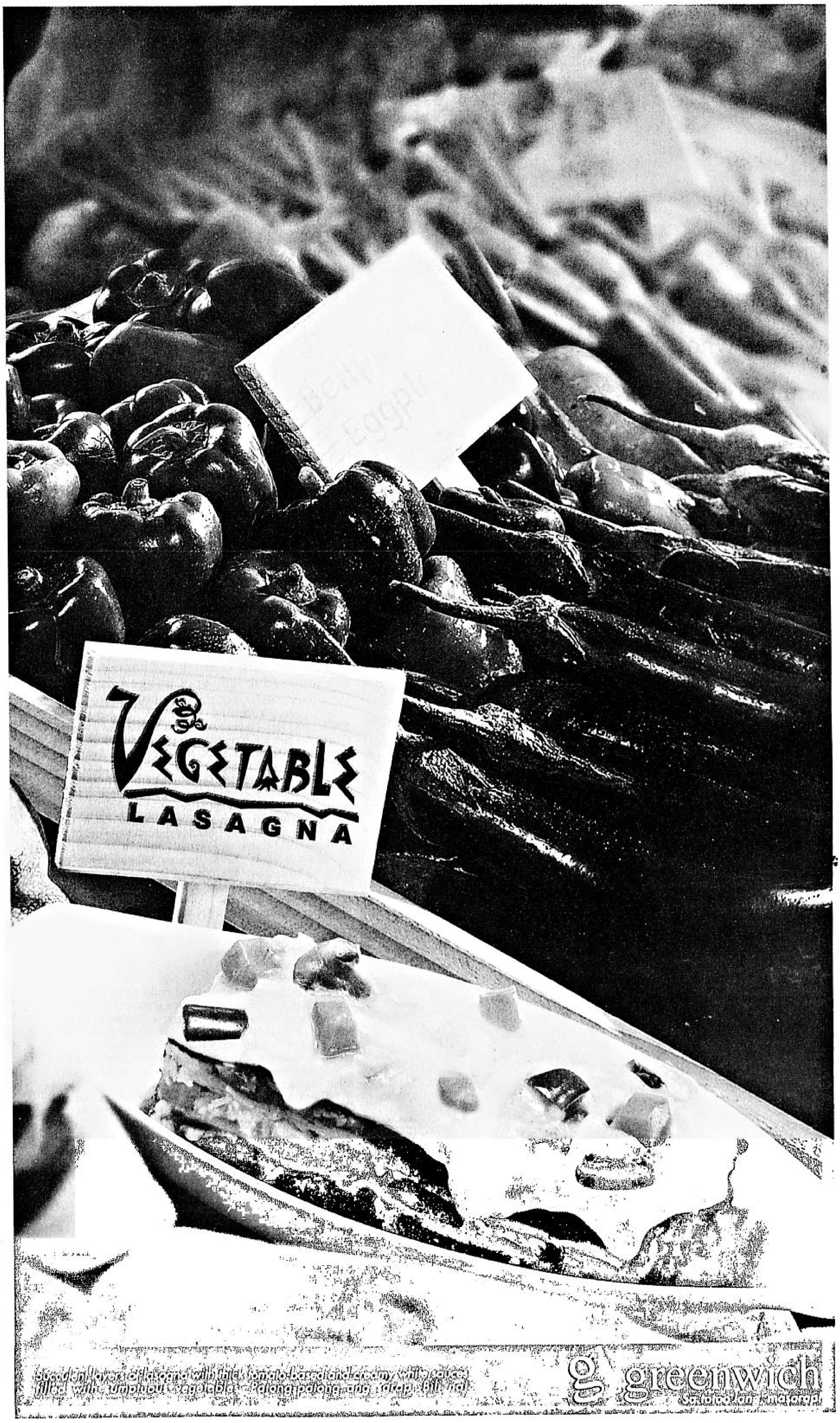
Make a splash in right gear

G TONGI gets geared up to make a splash in Freeway's summer swimsuits.

The label's summer fashion collection in sexy and trendy designs, delightful colors, and ultra comfortable fabrics is available in 20 outlets nationwide. Sizes range from extra small to large.

Visit Freeway at SM North Edsa (lower G/F, Main Bldg.), SM Megamall (2/F, Bldg. A), SM Southmall (G/F), SM Sucat (2/F), SM Bicutan (Street level), SM Bacoor (2/F), SM Pampanga (Annex), SM Lucena, SM Marilao, Robinsons Galleria (3/F), Robinsons Place Manila (G/F), Robinsons Metroeast Pasig (2/F), Robinsons Novaliches, Glorietta 1 (G/F), Ayala Center Cebu, Alimall Cubao, Festival Mall (2/F), Abanao Square, Baguio, Pavillion Mall, Sta. Rosa. Visit www.freeway.com.ph

G TONGI dons a Freeway swimsuit.


VEGETABLE
LASAGNA
Succulent layers of lasagna with thick tomato-based and creamy white sauces filled with sumptuous vegetables. Palong-palong ang sarap. Bili na!
g greenwich

RUFFLED printed silk chiffon (left), printed silk chiffon drop waist, silk chiffon sheath, spaghe

K&Co goes against the grain by targeting women who want to grow old not just with grace but style, too

In good company

By Kitty Go
Contributor

FOR many successful fashion brands, the pursuit of new customers comes with keeping the selection young. Specialty retail chains such as Bench and Kamiseta cater to a young adult following, an age group making up almost half of the population.

Interestingly Katherine Ong, owner and designer of K&Co (Rockwell Power Plant, Edsa Shangri-La and now Glorietta 3), is an exception in the crowded retail scene in pursuit of *bagets*. She admits to "growing old with the market but that's because women (her customers) have changed." However, for the 30-something former UP Madrigal singer, that only means so many more years of great clothes at reasonable prices.

The K&Co market may have changed since Ong opened her first shop in 1995 and the company has experienced steady growth in a market known to be conservative and let's face it, cheap. Ong credits the success of her business to lessons and observations gained over the years toiling in bazaars and shop and department store consignments.

"I opened a boutique in Rockwell," she explains, "(Because) after studying the market I saw a niche for stylish clothing that was not available to people who couldn't pay over P3,000 for a dress."

The shift to soft

Unlike many designers who are media savvy and ready with quotes, conversation with Ong is more like a lecture on the Filipina's fashion needs and a hilarious crusade and precise observations on the Filipino male dress sense (more on that later). Her core customer is not unlike her, someone whom she defines as "classic and understated, loves new trends but is not slavish. She knows what she wants."

Despite her moderate price points, her customers seem to be the types who spend and buy in multiples. A typical VIP client could spend P10,000-20,000 every week when new deliveries arrive. They are also a study in contrasts, buying five shift dresses at a time for about P3,000 each yet plunking down close to P25,000 for a single purse in mother of pearl.

"Eventually they had to move away from shift dresses to softer dressing," tells Ong of her customers' changing taste, "And I have to put in forgiving styles like blousons, empire bodies, sleeves to cover big arms and wrap dresses."

K&Co has made a reputation for doing dressy clothes but, says the designer, "We started with shift dresses, *then* moved to dressy!" Today, the shops still count shift dresses as best sellers together with straight-legged trousers, empire tops and anything in linen.

The problem with men

She is very happy with her captive market and says they are easy to please, now willing to try new things and are more style-conscious. But the parameters of casual chic and dressy are still alien to many.

"When you say casual, people think it is a shirt and jeans or a shirt and slacks. When I make a dress in a color that isn't neutral, they will presume it is dressy. But I will really call it casual chic," she elaborates.

A few years ago, Ong, again using her own experience, decided to plunge into a business where few have succeeded—menswear. From clothes to cologne, men have always been a difficult market. Yet for her husband Stanley Cheng, clothes were a problem of gigantic proportions from a combination of reasons, such as style availability, sizes and basically because he didn't know how to shop for himself.

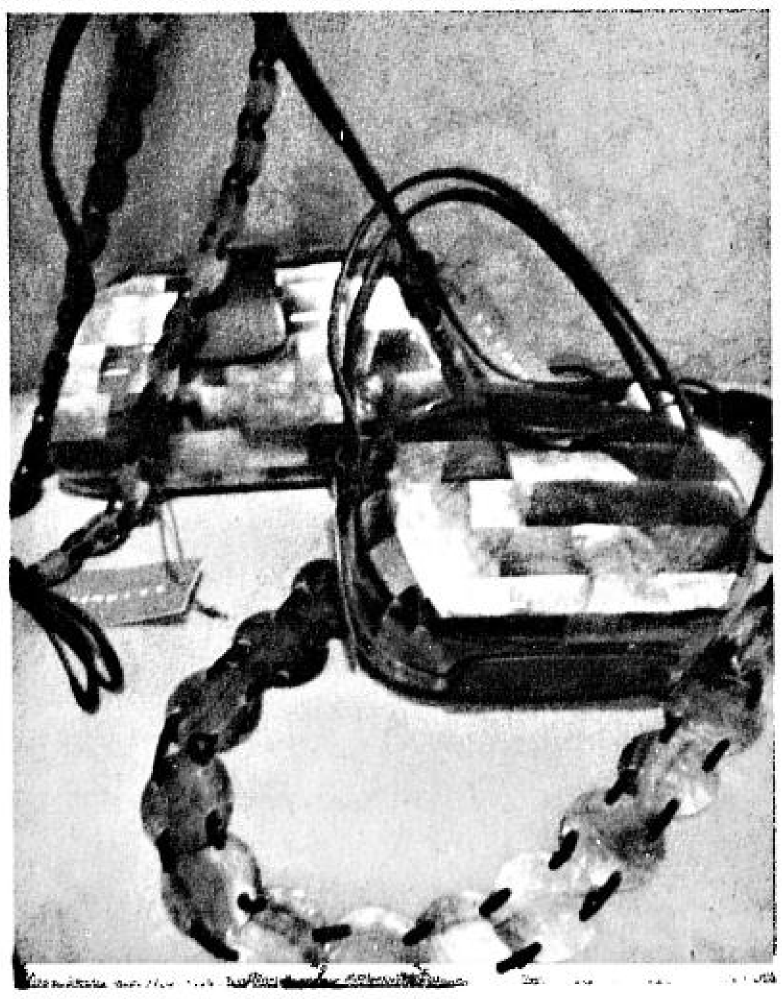
Now, Stan wears short-sleeved, one-pocket button-down shirts in great prints that pass off as vintage but are actually from K&Co.

"Men are still very conservative. Still blue or blue-and-white stripes," she laments, "I have to keep my styles casual because they never think they have an occasion to wear something dressy." Like her who is a K&Co customer, her husband's sartorial approval mandates the production of a shirt.

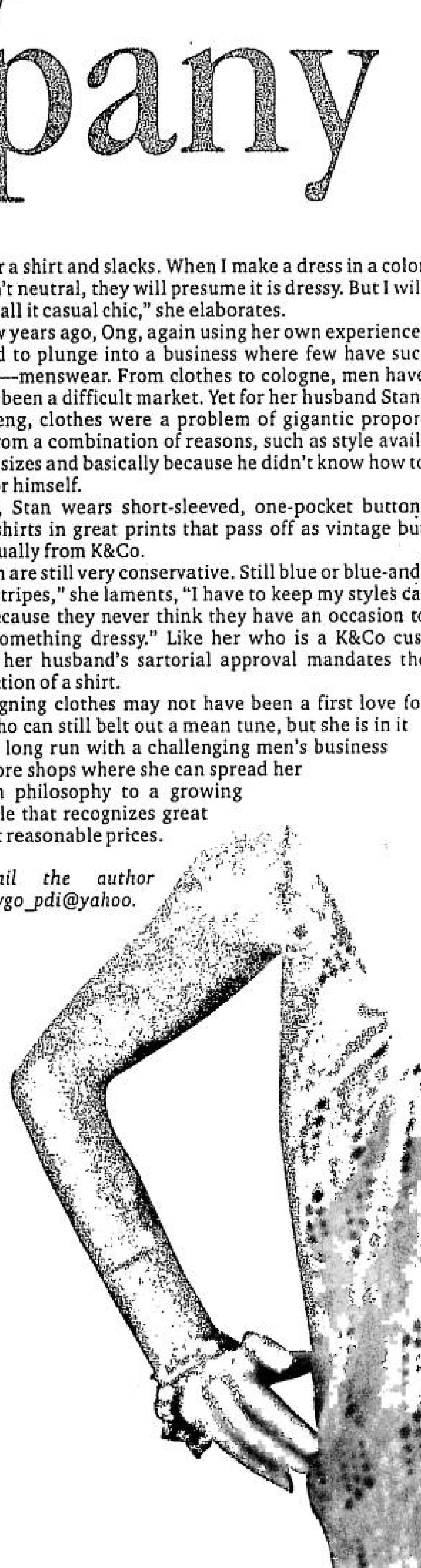
Designing clothes may not have been a first love for Ong who can still belt out a mean tune, but she is in it for the long run with a challenging men's business and more shops where she can spread her fashion philosophy to a growing clientele that recognizes great style at reasonable prices.

E-mail the author at kittygo_pdi@yahoo.com

SEMI-PRECIOUS charm bracelets/ choker and feathered beaded silk bag



MOTHER of Pearl bags and belts from Tahiti



V-NECK silk halter blouse

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Model Turlington debuts yoga clothes

NEW YORK—Designer and model Christy Turlington and Puma AG on Tuesday debuted their newest collaboration, a line of clothes designed for vigorous yoga sessions, with Amazon.com Inc. as the exclusive online retailer.

As a vast number of Americans now practice some form of yoga—15 million and 20 million are the estimates that get bandied about—companies including Nike Inc. and Gap Inc. have moved to capitalize on the trend.

However, Turlington said she created the new line, called Mahanuala, to meet the needs that she recognized in her own life as a yoga practitioner of 17 years, making it distinct from a mere brand extension.

Turlington first partnered with Germany's Puma in 2000 to launch Nuala, a high-priced line made largely in Italy and sold by spa boutiques and luxury stores.

Mahanuala, on the other hand, has the potential to reach a much broader audience through Amazon, which claims 40 million people as its customers.

As a result of lower production costs in Turkey, Portugal and Greece, Mahanuala pants, shorts, tops and cover-ups can be bought for $32 to $70 on Amazon.com, which is offering free shipping for the first month.

"The behavior our customers have shown us in other product categories—yoga books, yoga DVDs— and the strength of sales in this part of our apparel and accessories store are all good indications that this is the kind of product our customers are interested in," Grandinetti said.

Turlington has written a book, "Living Yoga: Creating A Life Practice," and has been featured on the cover of Time magazine as the face of American yoga.

She is also associated with healthy living through her roles as an anti-smoking spokesperson and founder of a skincare line based on ayurveda, traditional Indian medicine.

Her venture into fashion design was borne of her desire for an alternative to the garish colors and obvious branding that were prevalent in athletic wear.

"When I created Nuala, there were no clothes being marketed to (yoga practitioners.) In classes, people were wearing sweats or dancer clothes," Turlington said.

Over time, retail demand for Nuala became split between the workout garb and what Turlington calls "lifestyle pieces"—diaphanous, drapey clothes that evoke a life of contemplation.

"It was hard to present it as a complete collection... so ultimately we decided we needed to do another line," said Turlington. "Mahanuala is more technically focused."

Mahanuala is designed specifically for the practice of asana, or what is commonly regarded today as yoga. Asana is in fact one component of the broad Indo-Tibetan spiritual tradition of yoga.

Maha, Turlington explained, is Sanskrit for "higher" and an acronym for "movement affords higher ambition." The line is designed to offer support and coverage to a woman's body without restricting her from stretching, contorting and generally sweating through a yoga session.

"It has nice colors and flattering cuts, so it's still feminine and somewhat fashionable," Turlington said. "The idea is that you don't have to change before or after class. You can still look respectable on the street."

Reuters

biased-cut silk dress

TWO-LAYER biased-cut silk chiffon sheath

Hulog ng Langit
Tuna & Mushroom
BAKED RICE MELT

Thank heavens! Bumalik na ang Tuna and Mushroom Baked Rice Melt! A special Lenten offering of hot, steamy rice covered in tuna, mushrooms and corn, topped with melted cheese. Tikman na ang maluwalhating sarap!

greenwich
Sa totoo lang, masarap!

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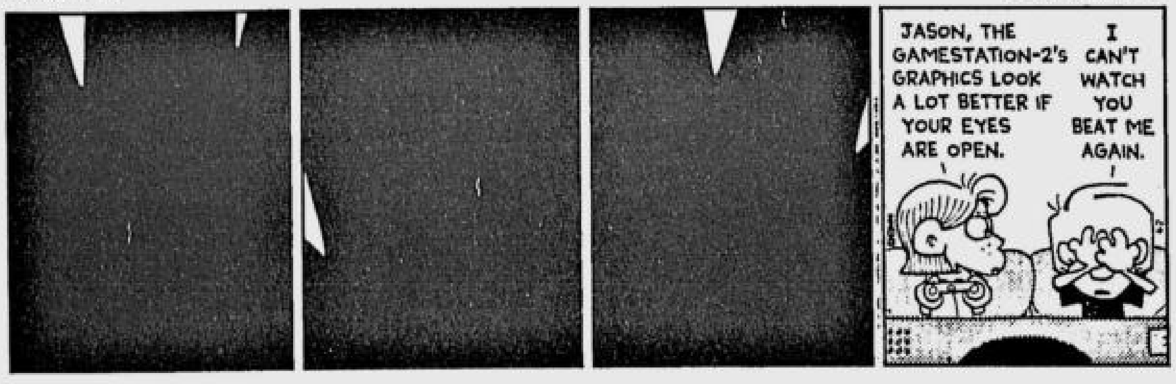
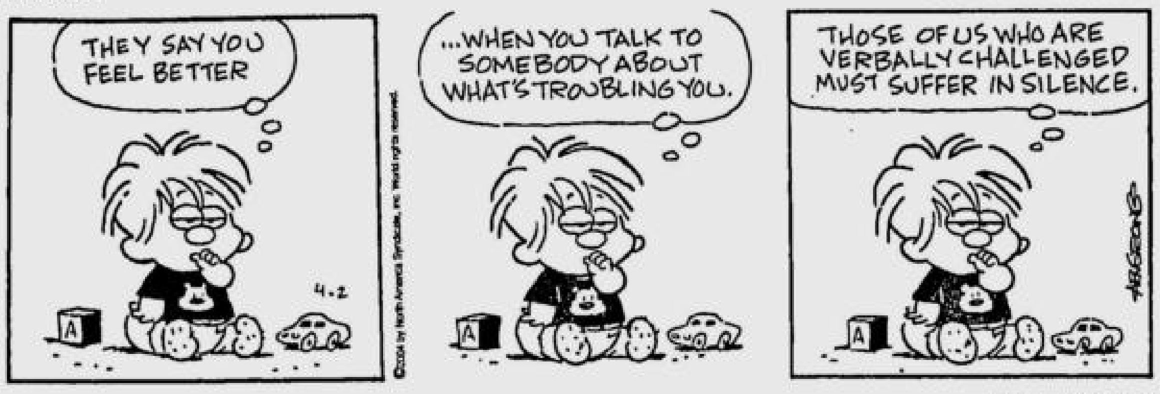
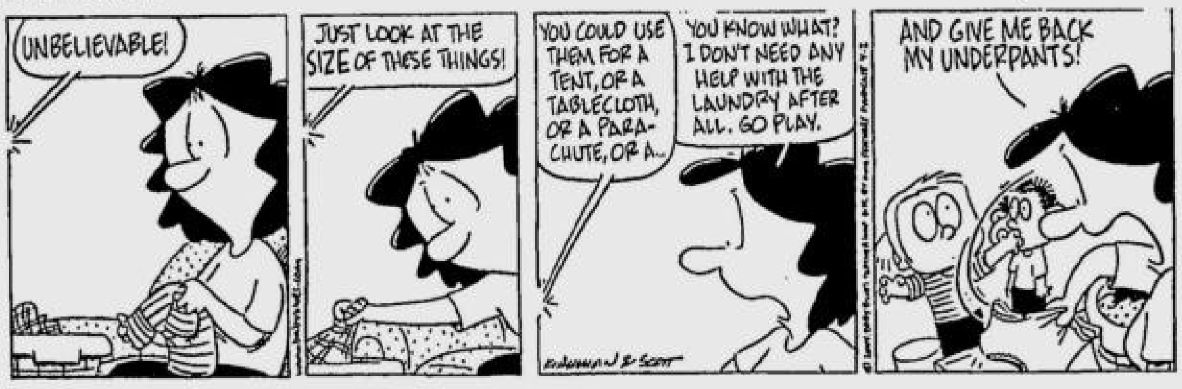
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


JASON, THE GAMESTATION-2's GRAPHICS LOOK A LOT BETTER IF YOUR EYES ARE OPEN.
I CAN'T WATCH YOU BEAT ME AGAIN.

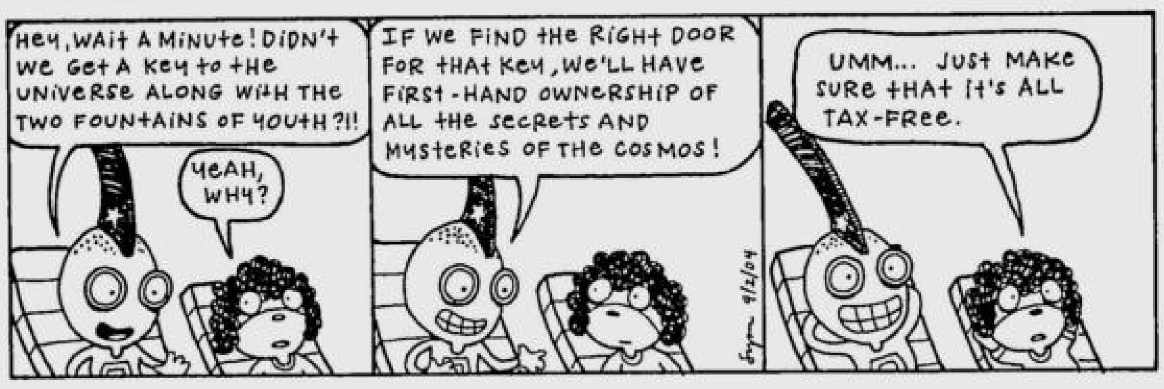
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


THEY SAY YOU FEEL BETTER
...WHEN YOU TALK TO SOMEBODY ABOUT WHAT'S TROUBLING YOU.
THOSE OF US WHO ARE VERBALLY CHALLENGED MUST SUFFER IN SILENCE.
4.2

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


UNBELIEVABLE!
JUST LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THESE THINGS!
YOU COULD USE THEM FOR A TENT, OR A TABLECLOTH, OR A PARACHUTE, OR A...
YOU KNOW WHAT? I DON'T NEED ANY HELP WITH THE LAUNDRY AFTER ALL. GO PLAY.
AND GIVE ME BACK MY UNDERPANTS!
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, wait a minute! Didn't we get a key to the universe along with the two fountains of youth?!!
Yeah, why?
If we find the right door for that key, we'll have first-hand ownership of all the secrets and mysteries of the cosmos!
Umm... just make sure that it's all tax-free.
4/2/04

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're sincere, honest and dedicated, and you work hard for whatever you value. There is a kind of nobility about you. Others think you are childlike at times, but this is simply due to your extreme idealism. You're well-loved by your friends and family. An important choice awaits you this year. Choose wisely. **Birthdate of:** Emmylou Harris, singer; Sir Alec Guinness, actor; Marvin Gay, soul singer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You're starting to think more about what you value in life. You don't want to be old and regret that you blew it. You want your money on the right horse.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You have a strong urge to travel more now. You're suddenly more curious about everything! In fact, your mind seems to jump from issue to issue very quickly.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): For many reasons, in the next few weeks, you might get more in touch with the hidden sides of your own personality. This is also a good time to do solitary research.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Re-examine your position with respect to the standards set by some group. Talk over your problems with friends. (Remember that friends, too, have their prejudices.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You might want to take on a new study now that could promote your career. New techniques and new mastery over things are always an advantage.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): In the next few weeks, you will expand your horizons in some way. You want to take a larger view of life. You're keen on understanding other places and different cultures.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Even the most casual conversation could have a profound effect on your mind now and in the next few weeks. You keep seeing things differently!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Because you're slightly more detached than usual, this is a good time to patch up differences with friends and partners. (Use this to your advantage.)

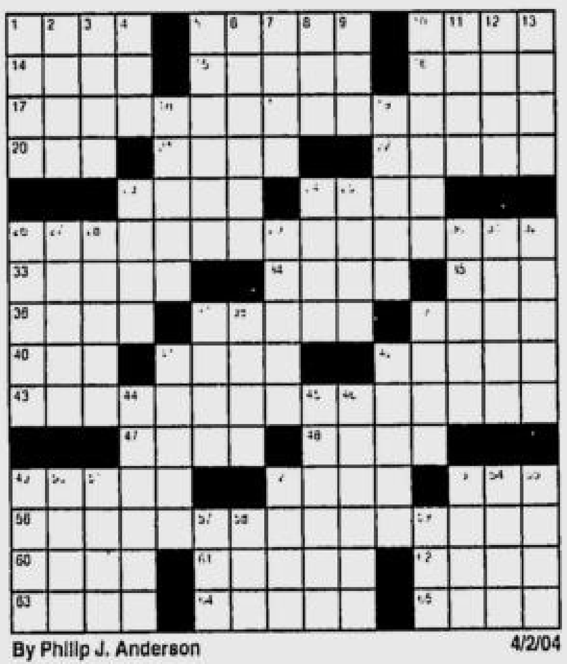
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You're more attentive to detail than usual. You want everything around you to be neat and tidy. That's why this is a good time to make plans connected with work.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Your motto is "no pain, no gain." In the month ahead, however, don't try to justify everything that you do. Sometimes playing and goofing off is what's best for your mental health.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): An important discussion with one of your parents about a significant past event might take place now. You need to know the truth. You want to get to the bottom of something.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You're entering a busy month! This is not a good time to settle down and relax. Expect short trips, errands and much discussion with others—especially siblings.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR
4/2/04

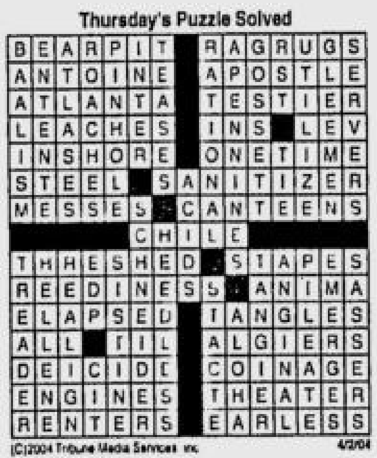
ACROSS

1 Mine entrance
5 Frequently
10 Combination of cards
14 Apple or quince
15 Spark producer
16 Logical starter?
17 Perelman, Barnum, Goodrich, Doctorow, Lawrence & Wyeth
20 Greek Aurora
21 M. Descartes
22 Itemizations
23 Puts on
24 Farm tower
26 Munro, Milne, Lang, White, Mencken & Auden
33 Eagle's home
34 Imprudent
35 Old Olds
36 Forbids
37 Serious play
39 D.C. bigwigs
40 Infamous Amin
41 Oceans
42 Connecting rooms
43 Eliot, Marshall, Snow, Lewis, Wells & Tittle
47 Overdue
48 Paris airport
49 Thread holder
52 Iowa State city
53 Debt chit
56 Lawrence, Griffith, Foyt, Wodehouse, cummings and King
60 Nobelist Wiesel
61 Warning
62 Nastase of tennis
63 Gaze
64 Loamy deposit
65 __-do-well

DOWN

1 Altar area
2 Karate school
3 Rascals
4 Hanoi holiday
5 Outrage
6 Strip blubber
7 Mah-jongg piece
8 Conclude
9 Final degree
10 Flunky
11 Roush and Hall
12 Time of fasting
13 Medical pers.
18 Bankrupt
19 Koran deity
23 Podium
24 Phony
25 "Casablanca" role
26 Custom
27 Leaders
28 Palmer of golf
29 Army bigwigs
30 Artoo Detoo, e.g.
31 Write Eudora
32 Book before Joel
37 Part of N.Y.P.D.
38 Track event
39 Small and weak
41 La __ (Milan opera house)
42 Spanish sauce
44 Stare angrily
45 Four-baggers
46 Says howdy
49 Stair
50 Legendary soccer player
51 Mutt of Garfield's jokes
52 1958 Pulitzer winner
53 Indolent
54 Tony's cousin
55 Over in Munich
57 Carrier from Tokyo
58 Arafat's grp.
59 Anais __

Thursday's Puzzle Solved



B	E	A	R	P	I	T	■	R	A	G	R	U	G	S
A	N	T	O	I	N	E	■	A	P	O	S	T	L	E
A	T	L	A	N	T	A	■	T	E	S	T	I	E	R
L	E	A	C	H	E	S	■	I	N	S	■	L	E	V
I	N	S	H	O	R	E	■	O	N	E	T	I	M	E
S	T	E	E	L	■	S	A	N	I	T	I	Z	E	R
M	E	S	S	E	S	■	C	A	N	T	E	E	N	S
■	■	■	■	■	C	H	I	L	E	■	■	■	■	■
T	H	R	E	S	H	E	D	■	S	T	A	P	E	S
R	E	E	D	I	N	E	S	S	■	A	N	I	M	A
E	L	A	P	S	E	D	■	T	A	N	G	L	E	S
A	L	L	■	T	I	L	■	A	L	G	I	E	R	S
D	E	I	C	I	D	E	■	C	O	I	N	A	G	E
E	N	G	I	N	E	S	■	T	H	E	A	T	E	R
R	E	N	T	E	R	S	■	E	A	R	L	E	S	S

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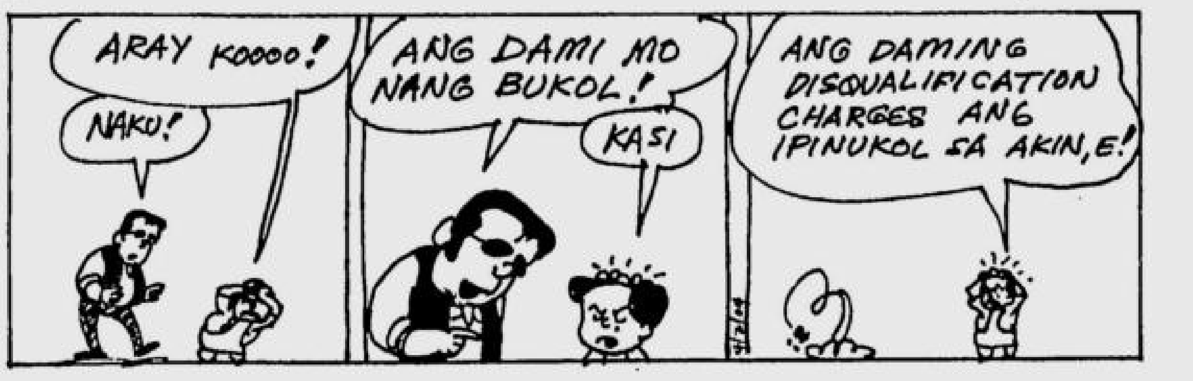
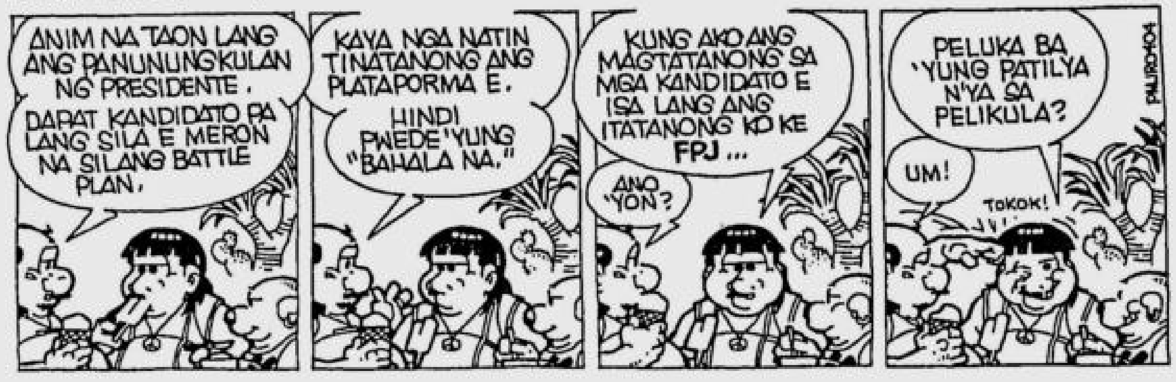
4/2/04

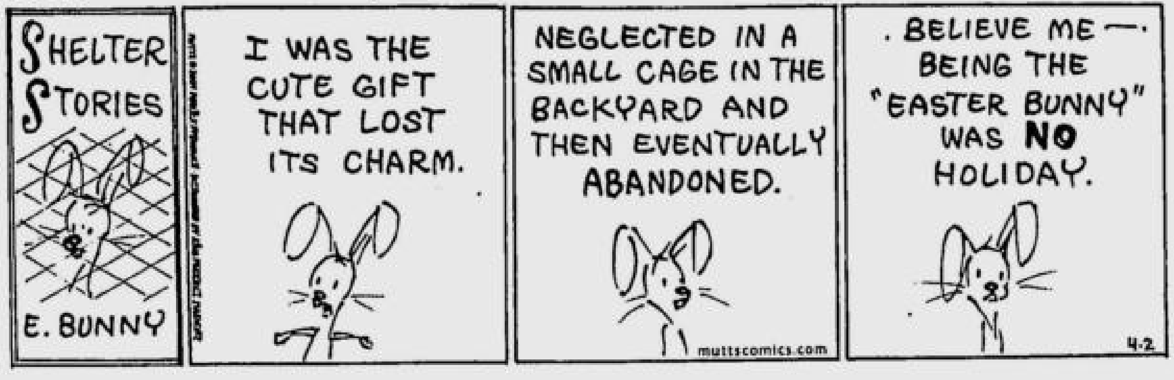
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


ARAY KOOOO!
NAKU!
ANG DAMI MO NANG BUKOL!
KASI
ANG DAMING DISQUALIFICATION CHARGES ANG IPINUKOL SA AKIN, E!

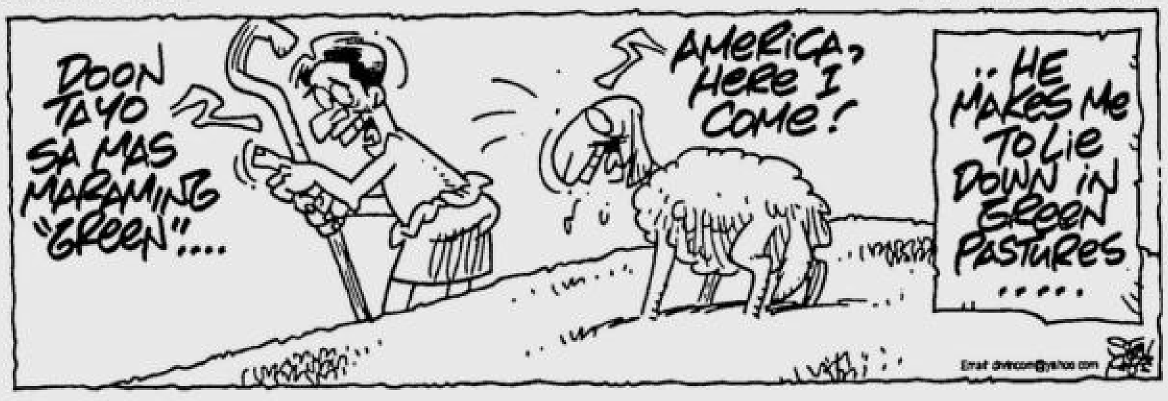
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANIM NA TAON LANG ANG PANUNUNGKULAN NG PRESIDENTE.
DAPAT KANDIDATO PA LANG SILA E MERON NA SILANG BATTLE PLAN.
KAYA NGA NATIN TINATANONG ANG PLATAPORMA E.
HINDI PWEDE 'YUNG "BAHALA NA."
KUNG AKO ANG MAGTATANONG SA MGA KANDIDATO E ISA LANG ANG ITATANONG KO KE FPJ...
ANO 'YON?
PELUKA BA 'YUNG PATILYA N'YA SA PELIKULA?
UM!
TOKOK!

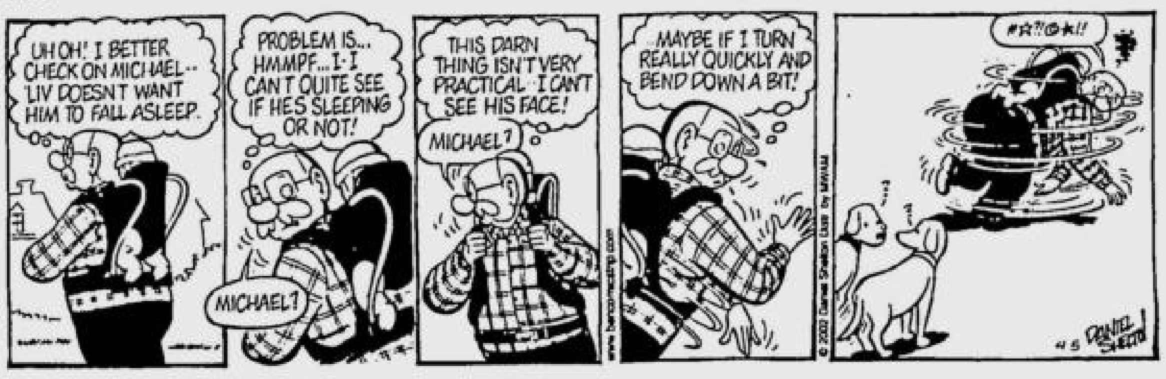
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


SHELTER STORIES
E. BUNNY
I WAS THE CUTE GIFT THAT LOST ITS CHARM.
NEGLECTED IN A SMALL CAGE IN THE BACKYARD AND THEN EVENTUALLY ABANDONED.
muttscomics.com
. BELIEVE ME —. BEING THE "EASTER BUNNY" WAS NO HOLIDAY.
4.2

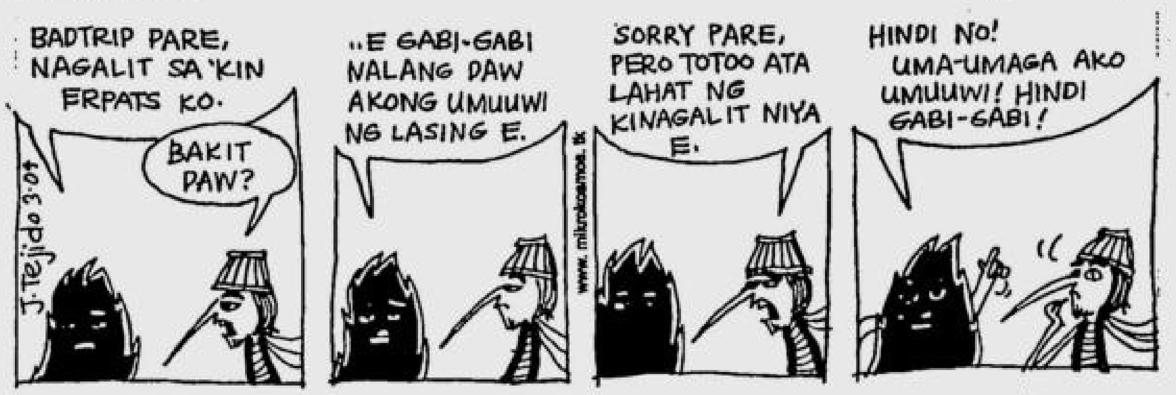
DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS


DOON TAYO SA MAS MARAMING "GREEN"....
AMERICA, HERE I COME!
..HE MAKES ME TO LIE DOWN IN GREEN PASTURES .....
Email divincom@yahoo.com

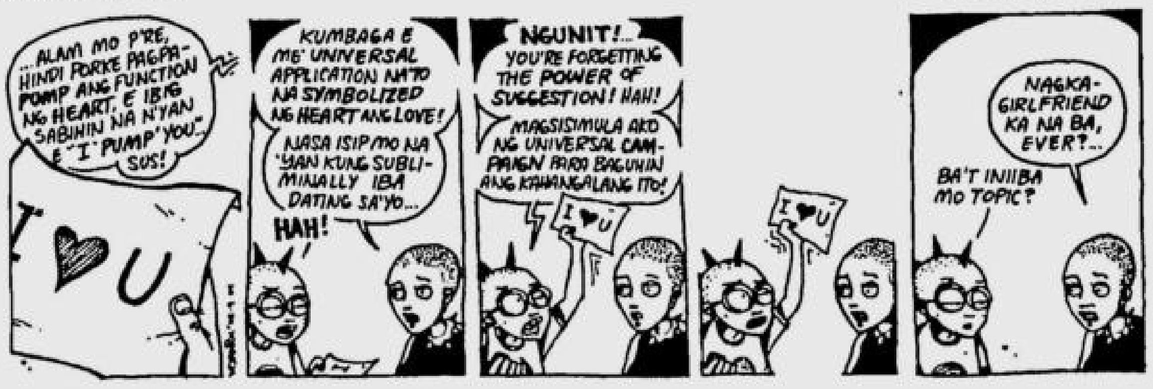
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


UH OH! I BETTER CHECK ON MICHAEL-- 'LIV DOESN'T WANT HIM TO FALL ASLEEP.
PROBLEM IS... HMMPF... I-I CAN'T QUITE SEE IF HE'S SLEEPING OR NOT!
MICHAEL?
THIS DARN THING ISN'T VERY PRACTICAL. I CAN'T SEE HIS FACE!
MICHAEL?
...MAYBE IF I TURN REALLY QUICKLY AND BEND DOWN A BIT!
#*?!@*!!
4-5 DANIEL SHELTON

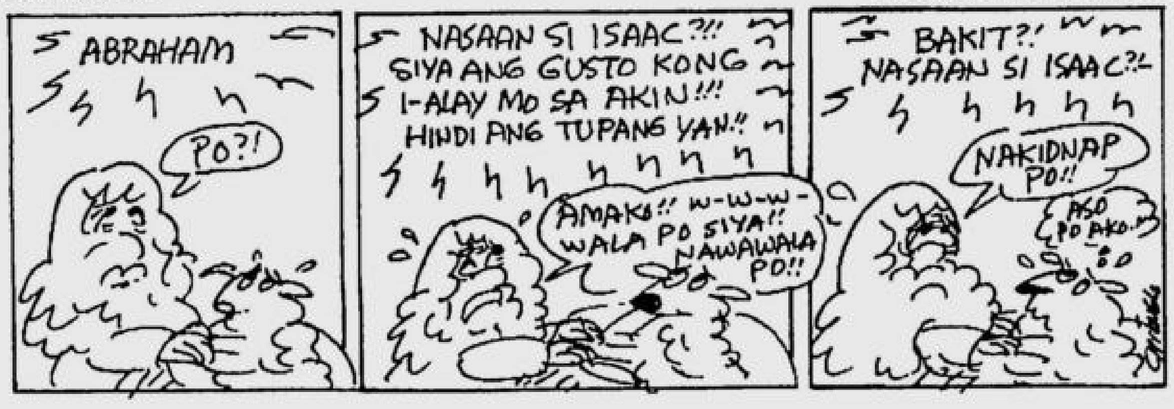
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


BADTRIP PARE, NAGALIT SA'KIN ERPATS KO.
BAKIT DAW?
..E GABI-GABI NALANG DAW AKONG UMUUWI NG LASING E.
SORRY PARE, PERO TOTOO ATA LAHAT NG KINAGALIT NIYA E.
HINDI NO! UMA-UMAGA AKO UMUUWI! HINDI GABI-GABI!
J. Tejido 3.04
www.mikrokosmos.tk

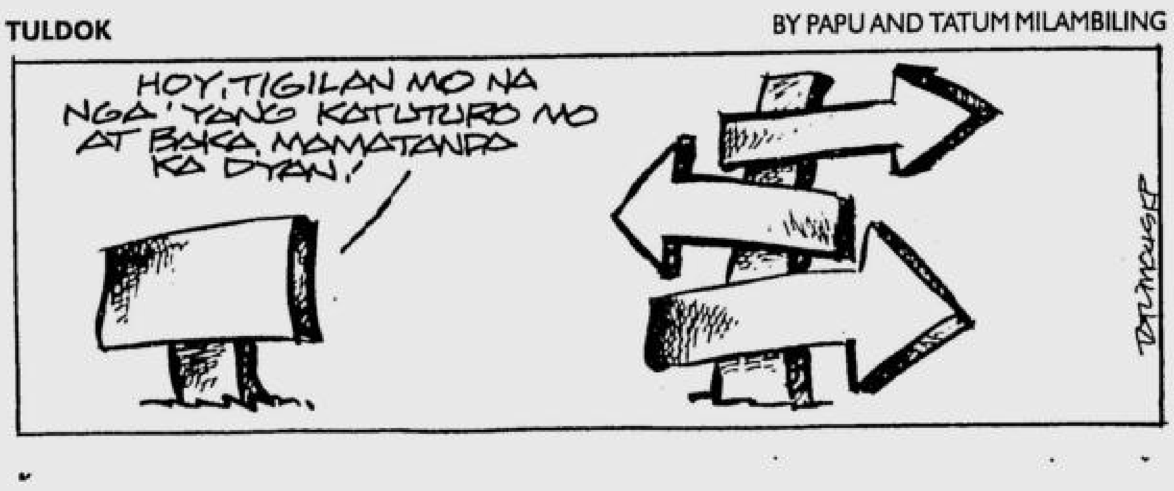
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


...ALAM MO P'RE, HINDI PORKE PAGPA-PUMP ANG FUNCTION NG HEART, E IBIG SABIHIN NA N'YAN E "I PUMP YOU." SUS!
I ♥ U
KUMBAGA E ME' UNIVERSAL APPLICATION NA'TO NA SYMBOLIZED NG HEART ANG LOVE!
NASA ISIP MO NA 'YAN KUNG SUBLIMINALLY IBA DATING SA'YO...
HAH!
NGUNIT!.. YOU'RE FORGETTING THE POWER OF SUGGESTION! HAH!
MAGSISIMULA AKO NG UNIVERSAL CAMPAIGN PARA BAGUHIN ANG KAHANGALANG ITO!
I ♥ U
I ♥ U
NAGKA-GIRLFRIEND KA NA BA, EVER?...
BA'T INIIBA MO TOPIC?

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

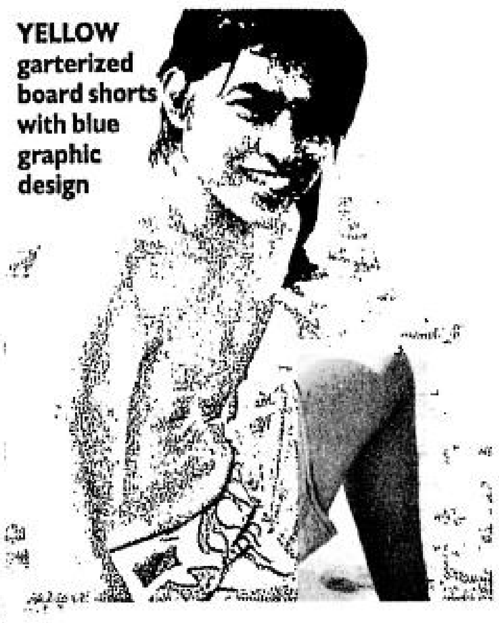

ABRAHAM
PO?!
NASAAN SI ISAAC?!! SIYA ANG GUSTO KONG I-ALAY MO SA AKIN!!! HINDI ANG TUPANG YAN!!
AMAKO!! W-W-W-WALA PO SIYA!! NAWAWALA PO!!
BAKIT?! NASAAN SI ISAAC?!
NAKIDNAP PO!!
ASO PO AKO..!

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


HOY, TIGILAN MO NA NGA 'YANG KATUTURO MO AT BAKA MAMATANDA KA DYAN!

Cooling off in sizzling fashion

MULTICOLORED striped two-piece boyshorts



YELLOW garterized board shorts with blue graphic design

IT'S off to the beach in sizzling fashion this season at SM.

Beach babes can get into the swim of things in eye-catching swimsuits—in stripes, graphic and exotic floral prints. They can also mix and match tops and bottoms—tankinis, tube and bikini tops with boy shorts or string bottoms.

Hunks can play it cool in reversible board shorts in hot neon colors and hibiscus prints.

The collection is available at the Girls and Boys Teenswear Department of all SM stores.

ORANGE two-piece tankini with stripe detail

FUN IN THE SUN. Blue and white hibiscus drawstring board shorts for him and her

TOOEY. Available in white

Shoes for active, stylish women

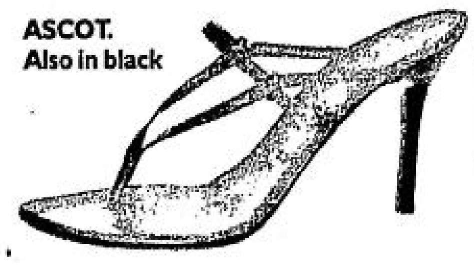
THE SUMMER shoe collection of internationally acclaimed designer Stuart Weitzman is now in Manila, courtesy of Rustan's Department Store.

These shoes are pieces of art crafted to define the passion, mood and style of every woman. The brand offers a vast range of stylish footwear featuring innovative materials and unique accents.

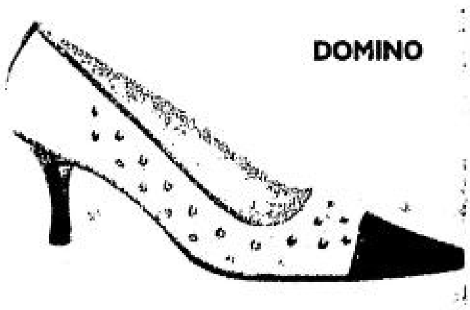
Tagged as the "King of the Evening Shoe," Weitzman maintains his products' quality through traditional patternmaking skills mixed with modern technology to execute his intricate designs.

Enjoy fun and casual designs such as Taekwondo and Amorous, elegant ones like Ascot and Grecian, and the clean and classy look of Tooey and Domino.

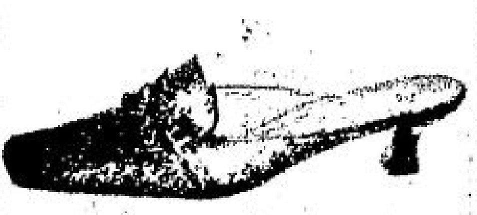
Stuart Weitzman shoes are exclusively available at Rustan's Makati.



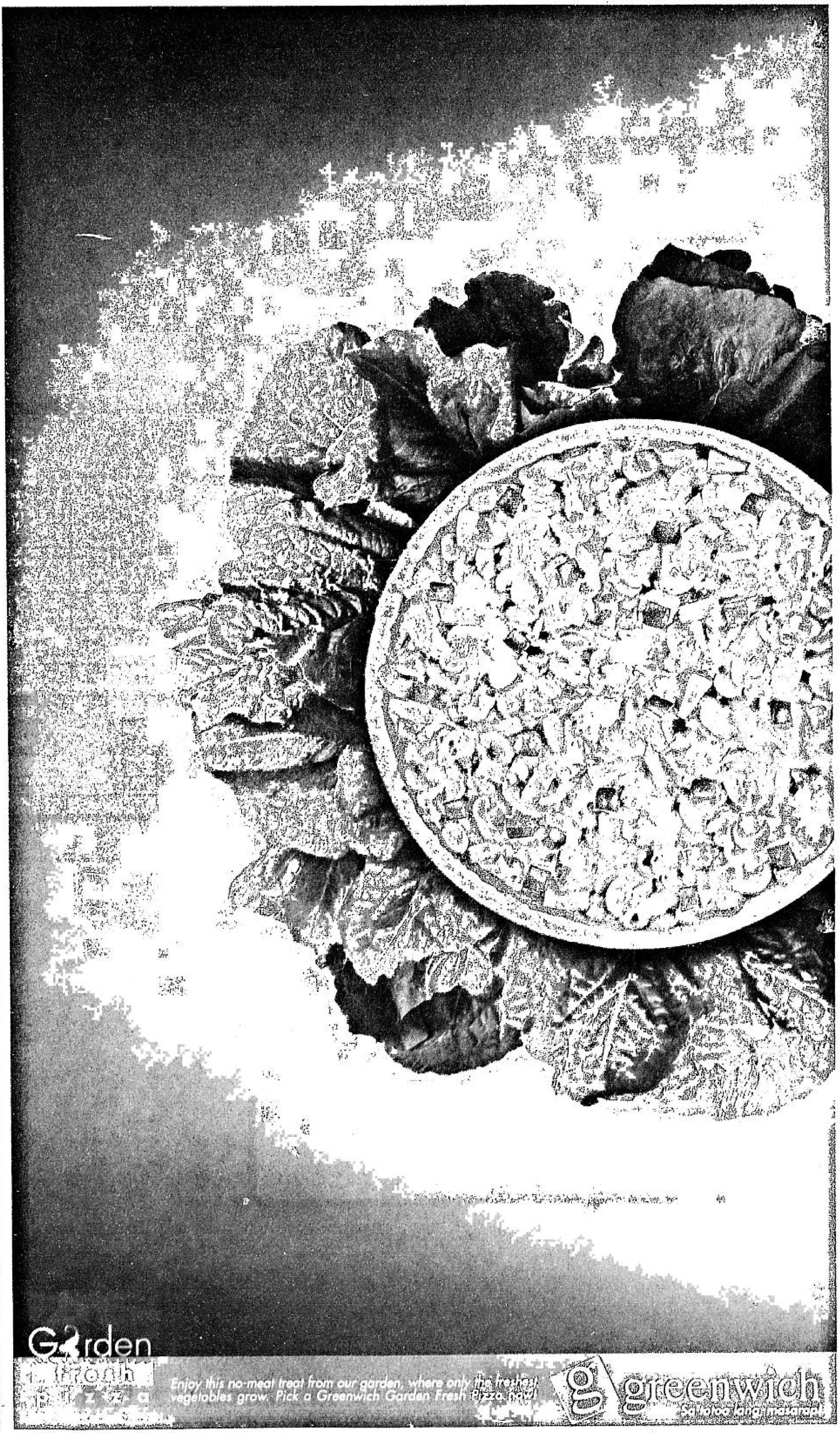
ASCOT. Also in black



DOMINO



TAEKWONDO. Available in bisquit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FREE MMS & GPRS	P150	P190	P225	P250	P275	P275
FREE TEXT MESSAGES	50	60	75	100	125	125
ADDICT TO ADDICT/SMART	P6.50	P6.00	P5.00	P4.50	P4.00	P4.00
ADDICT TO NON-SMART	P7.00	P6.50	P6.00	P5.50	P4.50	P4.50
ADDICT IDD	$0.40*					
TEXT FEE AFTER FREE SMS	P1.00	P0.50	P0.50	P0.50	P0.50	P0.50

- Once you exceed your Free MMS/GPRS allocation, we will begin charging you the corresponding service fees for each transaction. Kindly see the APPLICABLE SERVICE FEES grid for details.
- Rates are inclusive of VAT and Foreign Currency Adjustment (FCA). Consumable amount covers voice calls (local, NDD, IDD), SMS (local, International SMS) and VAS. Free Text & Free MMS/GPRS allocations apply to local text messages (SMART to SMART & SMART to other networks) and data/VAS (GPRS) MMS, Addict MMS downloads).

*Addict IDD rates are in US Dollars. Applicable to 200 destinations worldwide, excluding INMARSAT.

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FREE MINUTES	20 mins	85 mins	200 mins	350 mins	575 mins	675 mins
ADDICT TO ADDICT/SMART	P6.00	P5.50	P5.00	P4.50	P4.00	P3.50
ADDICT TO NON-SMART	P7.50	P7.00	P6.50	P6.00	P5.50	P4.50
ADDICT IDD	$0.40*					

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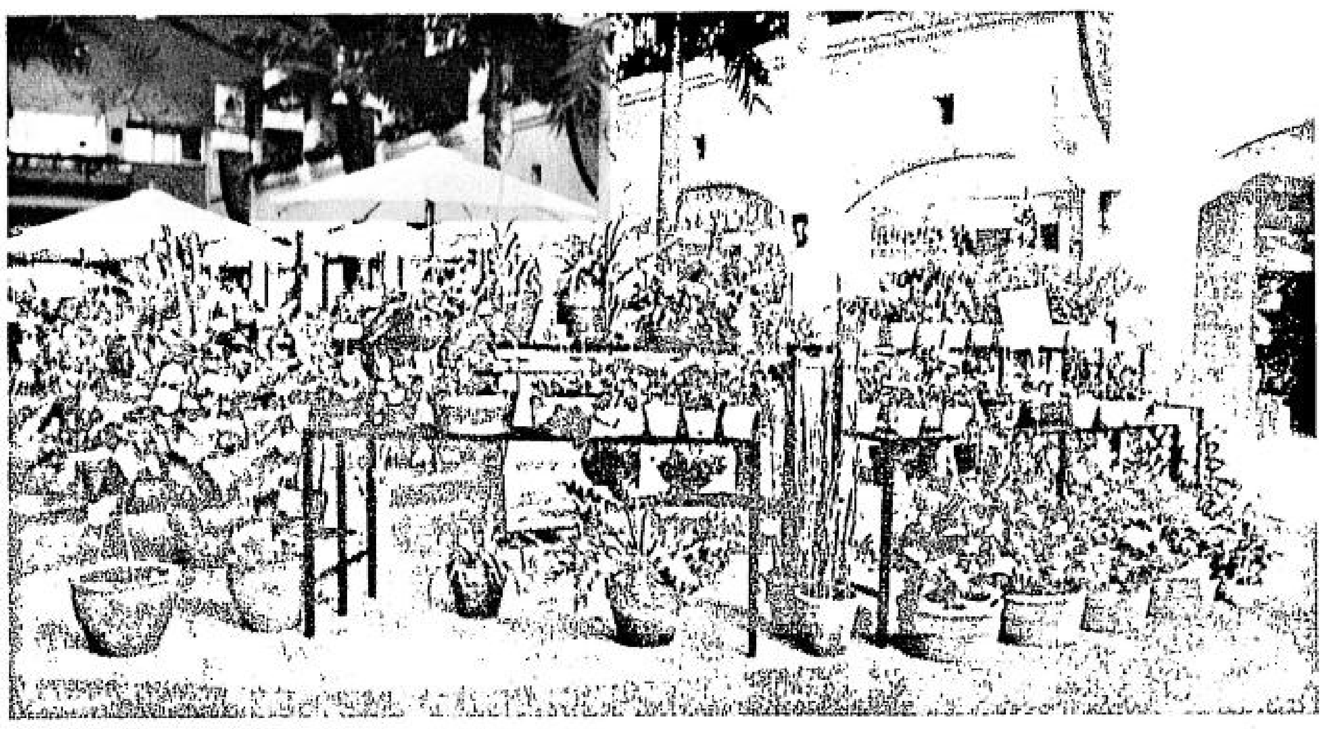

FOR sale at The Flower Farm display are herbs such as rosemary, basil, tarragon, chives and dill as well as bromeliads yellow Philodendrons.

Coffee, tea and herbs in new plant store

THE FLOWER Farm opens Garden, its newest concept store specializing in ornamental plants, potted flowers and garden accessories, at the newly renovated Commerce Mall of Alabang Town Center.

Ging de los Reyes, president of The Flower Farm Corp., said they tied up with Café Jamica to operate a coffee shop alongside their new store.

Café Jamica is owned by De los Reyes' friends Enrile and Evelyn Asuncion. Aside from various coffee concoctions, Café Jamica also offers Italian sodas and, soon, pastries and light snacks.

The Flower Farm's newest store carries fresh herbs like chives, dill, basil, tarragon, rosemary and mint to start a backyard herb garden or to add a gourmet touch to a home-cooked meal.

It also offers ornamental greens like bromeliads, horsetail, jacobenas, hederas, amapola and Ming fern, among others.

Flowering plants include gerberas, chrysanthemums and orchids.

The Flower Farm Corp. can also be found at Alabang Town Center, Madrigal Entrance (8094612 or 09); Rada Street, Legazpi Village, Makati (8156665/67/68); Ashcreek Center, Madison, San Juan (722-7122 or 44); and Glorietta 4 (7527206).

CAFÉ Jamica's Enrile Asuncion, Alabang Commercial Corp.'s Michael Dumlao and Maritonet Aluquin and The Flower Farm's Ging de los Reyes

MSA
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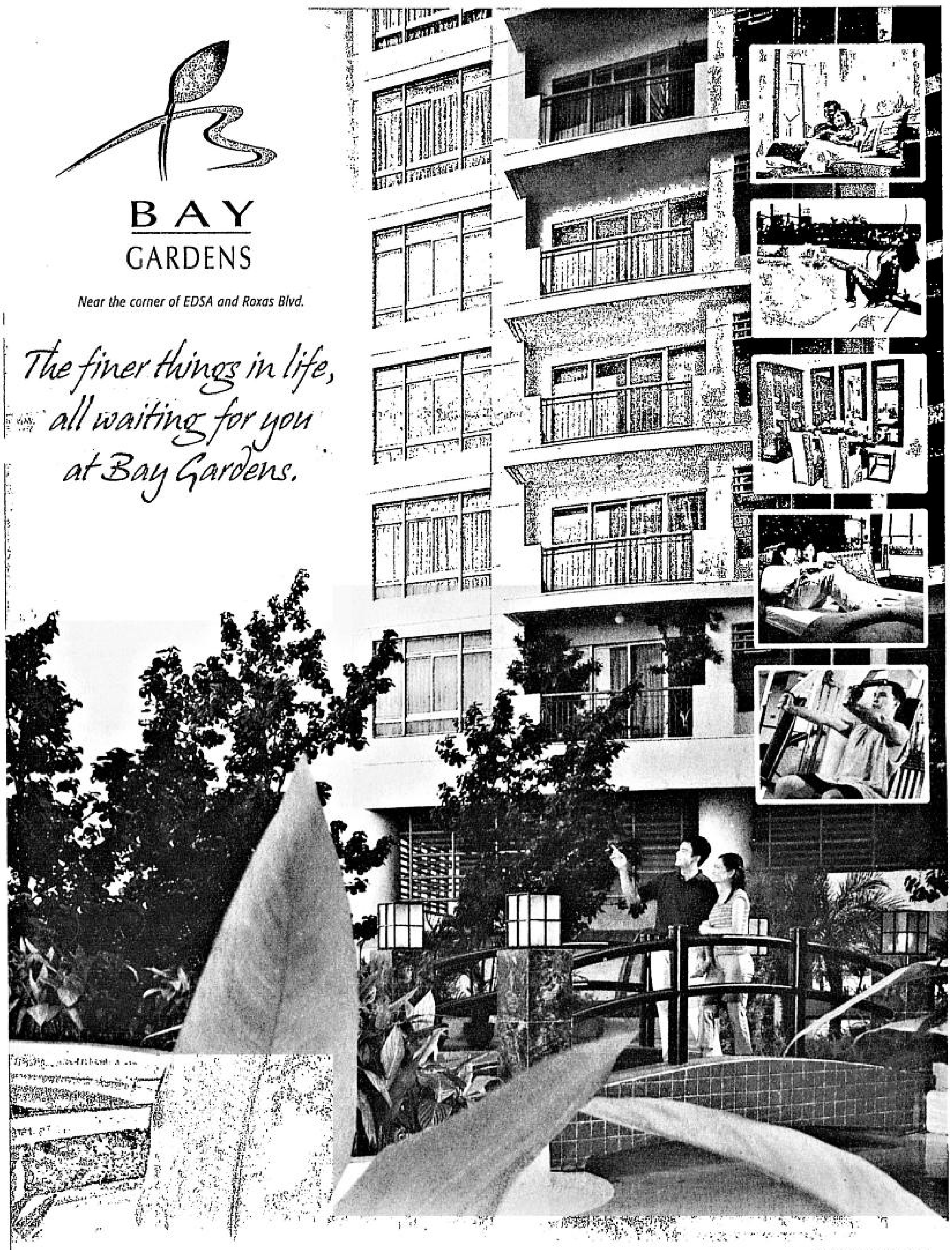

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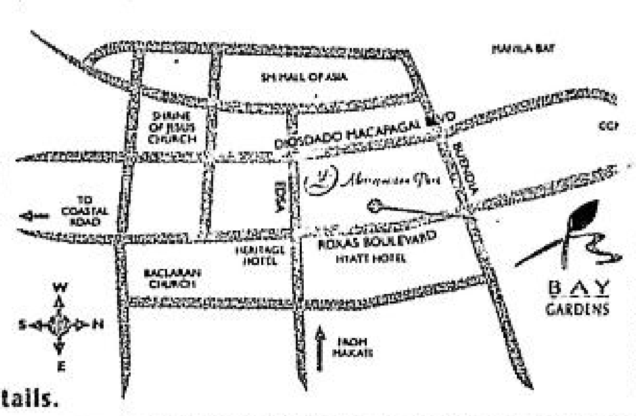

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NORTH EDSA

TOWERING SMASH. The fantastic Albert Trinidad doing his hard-to-beat high jumping front kick

HIGH kickers and the pearl: Albert Trinidad's roundhouse kick; Alex Jamena's knife-hand with downward block; Rita Sanson, owner of the Pearl of the Pacific resort; and Derrick Lazaro in his knife-hands, middle block. The team wears black Monsour training pants.

watch out
for a
sensuous
obsession
that will soon
unfold

NOKIA
Connecting People

PROUD coach Raul with his talented young Cebu team

THE FAMILY that kicks together stays together. The fabulous high-kicking Morales famille: Jobet with his wife Didith Agoncillo, and their kids Jiana (left) and cutie pie Daniella

High-flying kicks and wow acr

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** on **Kodak Max**

IT WAS the weekend when the beach of Boracay was sizzling because of the heat of bodies clashing during the Monsour Taekwondo Boracay Gold Challenge, superbly organized by the beautiful **Joy Zapanta** and bon vivant **Louie Cruz**, no less. It turned out to be the most unique event *moi* had ever seen mounted on the powdery shores of the paradise island of Boracay. It was made possible by Seair, everyone's favorite transport to the dream island.

For once, *palanggas*, it was not the same old, repetitious and tiring chill-out and rave parties held every Holy Week in this gorgeous isle.

This exciting weekend introduced the latest, hip Monsour Taekwondo Peak gear, in action show, with Taekwondo's high-kicking warriors as the supermodels.

Fashion, as some of you may know, has long ago invaded the courts of Wimbledon and expensive golf courses around the world. Now it invades the arena of taekwondo. The snazzy Peak Martial Arts Equipment is definitely the most popular taekwondo warrior's wardrobe of choice. It is owned by Southern gent **Monsour del Rosario**, dynamic **Jobet Morales** and energetic **Ricky Santiago**.

Everyone's favorite was the Team Synchronize Standard Poomse, which reminded me of the Olympic Underwater Synchronization Competition. The hard-hitting Cagayan de Oro Team bagged the gold medal. **Jorge Arsenal** was team coach. The members had stunning bodies that only God could have created: **Ernie Mar Gayao, Jehu Inciong, Endro Endrolin** and **Ernest John Mendoza**. Take a bow, dudes.

The big day of this two-day event was the taekwondo demo displayed by the Philippine National Demonstration Team, with **Angelito Ong, Albert Trinidad, Gilbert Jamena, Derrick Lazaro, Anthony Polmo, Jec Zarius Panotes** and the crowd's favorite, **Warren Valencia**.

The demo was packed with witty action and flying kicks. Our pal, **Resty Vergara**, fully covered in Nivea Sunblock, natch, was so impressed by Warren Valencia's flying effortlessly in the air, which seemed magical. Dynamic young businessman **Ernie Lopez** and his vivacious wife, Southern belle **Geena**, marveled at the performance while the large crowd roared with loud applause.

Boracay was like that island in Greece where the Olympic games all began eons ago. **Rita Sanson** of the popular Pearl of the Pacific Resort cheered with the excited audience while sipping the refreshing Gatorade, "to help forget the vicious sun," she told me.

Ipe Cruz, Raul Teehankee, Amil Cabanlig, Gabby Libarios, Donnie Ramirez, Rome Gorge and **Ruval Magpayo** were backing their own different teams who flew in from Cebu, Bacolod and Manille. But all enjoyed the spectacular board-kicking demo performed by everyone's favorite champion, Monsour, natch!

Monsour makes David Copperfield's flying acts look like child's play. But then that is what taekwondo classic style is all about, *di bala*?

Needless to say, my favorite was the Bacolod team, with coach **Jim Jim Chua** and **Von Eric Alayon, Andy Perdegueros, Ray Jon Otero** and **John Jo Alindogan** as members. **Sharon Sowy** was forever running around the Olympic-size court, assisting the players who were all first-timers in the island.

Monsour is not only the ambassador of Philippine taekwondo. He is a modern Renaisance sportsman who encourages local tourism through taekwondo. Believe me, *palanggas*, this was a first in the world: a taekwondo competition mounted on the beach, with the super assistance of Mayor Cicero Cawaling, the Sangguniang Bayan of Malay, the Philippine Coast Guard Auxilliary 609, **Bong Tirol, and Sandro** Rieta of the popular

(seated) **PHILIPPE Charriol, Nedy Tantoco, Maritess**
and Hendro Wiyogo from Indonesia; (standing) Raja S
and Michael Huang

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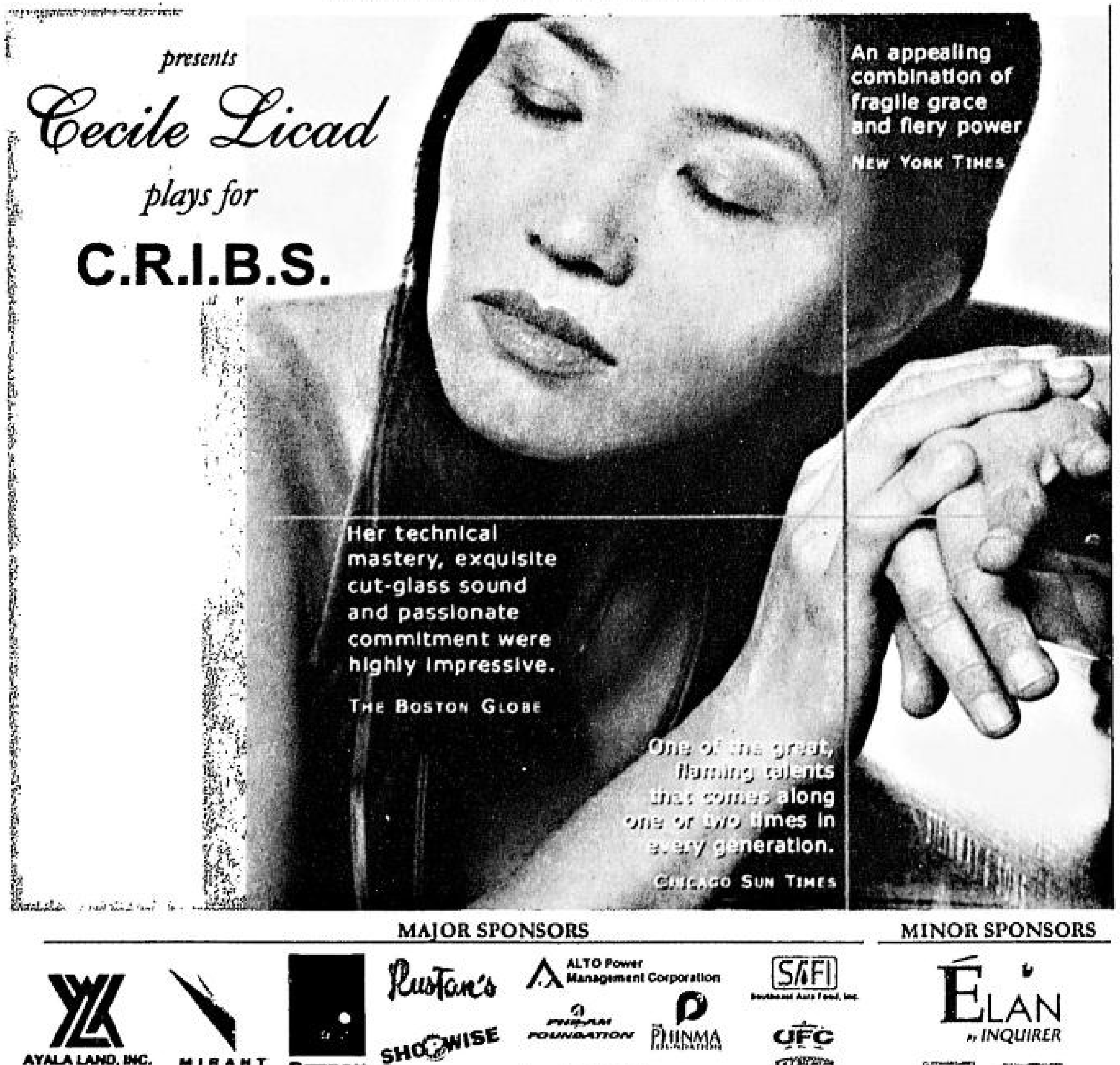
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Tickets available at P2000 / 1500 / 800 / 300

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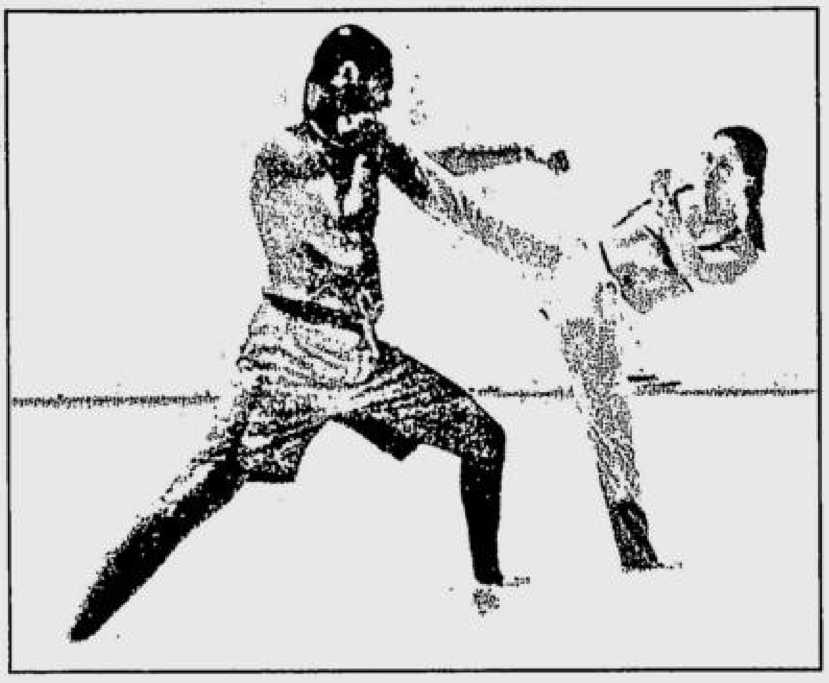
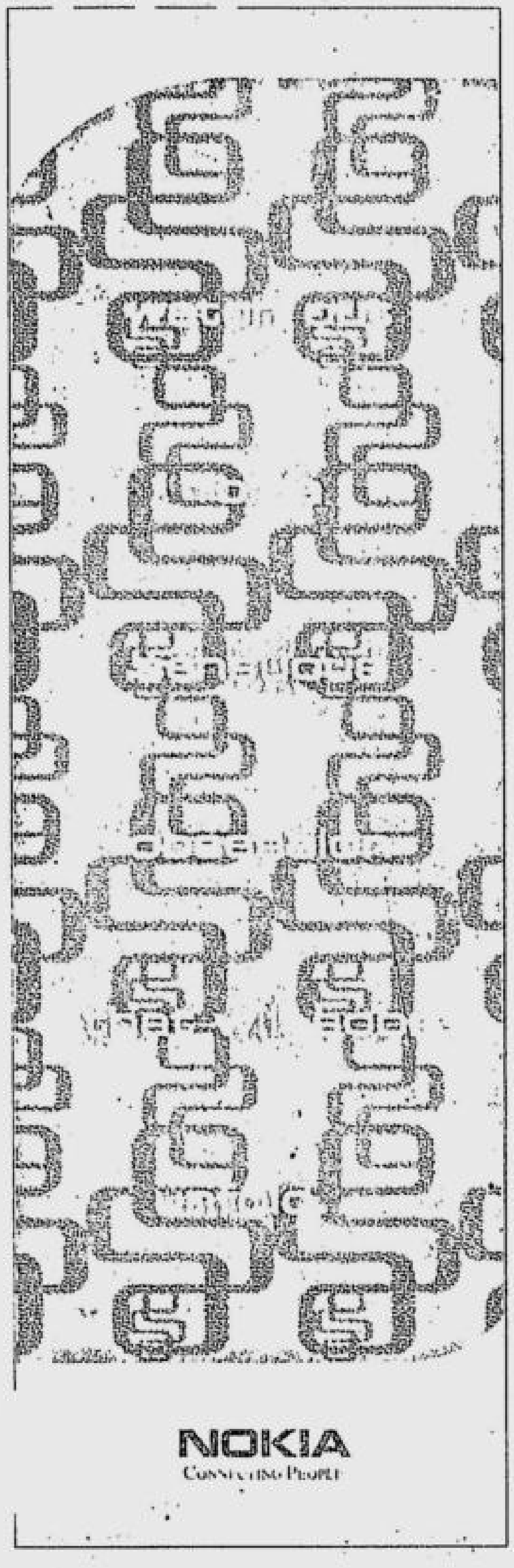
RAGE AND FURY. Spectacular taekwondo moves—Warren Valencia's flying side kick and Albert Trinidad's side kick



HOTSHOT taekwondo pair. Taekwondo champion Monsour del Rosario with his fiancée, Joy Zapanta, using a roundhouse kick

New jewelry store in Greenhills



MICHELIS Gifts and Jewellery, has opened its newest boutique at the Greenhills Shopping Center.

The new store offers a wide array of sterling silver pieces—from casual trinkets to formal jewelry. Each Michelis sterling silver creation is handcrafted according to European standards and is guaranteed to have the level of purity required by the international market.

Michelis also has branches at Rustan's (Alabang, Araneta Center, and Shangri-La Plaza) as well as Greenbelt 1, Makati Shangri-La Hotel Upper Lobby, Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Power Plant Lifestyles (Rockwell), and Greenhills Jewelry Center. Call 7228542 local 106 or 116.

MICHELIS offers a wide array of sterling silver pieces.

Boost to men's hair care

A RECENT market study shows that men's share in the personal care industry is growing by up to 40 percent a year. Men also account for up to 35 percent of salons' total clients. In fact, most men visit the salon every four to six weeks.

Men's personal care needs are different from women because of their lifestyle, biological and chemical makeup. But many of them use products that do not address their special needs.

Schwarzkopf Professional, a leading hair supplier worldwide, recognizes the special needs of men. It introduced Bonacure (BC) Men, a range of hair care and styling products especially for men.

For dandruff, there's the BC Men Dandruff Control Shampoo with Octopirox for dandruff-free, well-groomed hair.

For hair loss, there's the BC Men Phytobiogin Shampoo, a no-rinse formulation with modified wheat protein to strengthen fine and thinning hair from within. For hereditary hair loss, there's the BC Men Phytobiogin Tonic which stimulates blood circulation of the scalp and nourishes the roots. It increases the cell regeneration process and reduces premature hair loss by up to 20 percent after three months of daily use.

The new BC Men Anti-grease Shampoo with Sebolin is ideal for greasy hair. For slightly greasy hair, there's BC Men Vitalizing Shampoo with panthenol. For unruly hair, men should try the BC Men Styling Gel for control.

BC Men products are exclusively sold at selected salons. For the list of salons, call 7231763, 7268508, 7268507 or 7228474.

As a special summer treat, Schwarzkopf Professional is giving away a limited edition Schwarzkopf Washbag. Just purchase any two BC Men products and get your free bag. Promo is good while supply lasts.

Schwarzkopf is distributed in the Philippines by Top Style Marketing, with offices at 25PA Eisenhower Condominium, Eisenhower St., Greenhills, San Juan.

Barangay suspects . . .

From page E4

a mere local problem.

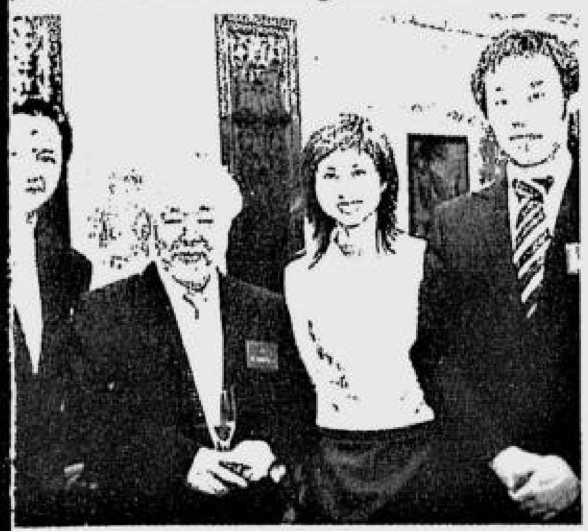
That's what the Unesco Philippines audit was all about: to pinpoint the environmental hotspots in the country and, as much as possible, provide help. If not, this country will lose all its rich bio-diversity and, ironically, because of companies invited to invest here to boost our economy.

Not all investors are heartless, that we know. But all we need is one or two to destroy what they use, and we can kiss those natural resources goodbye. Unless something is done fast—now.

E-mail the author at dorisnuyda@yahoo.com

obatics on Boracay

AMMAD Al Hussaini from Saudi Arabia, Florencia
gano from PCI and Samir Boghos from UAE



TSUTOMU Oishi and Toshiji Kotani from Japan, Carman Fan of PCFE and T. Marumoto from Japan

Mc Sandro Bistro, which has become everyone's fave resto in Bora.

By the way, Monsour and **Joy Zapanta** will walk down the aisle on June 25.

As for me, after all that energy flying all over the place, I extended my vacation.

Cabaret for Charriol

International delegates gathered in Manila recently for the annual worldwide marketing conference of the Philippe Charriol luxury goods empire.

After a six-course dinner hosted by Stores Specialists Inc. (SSI), Philippine franchisee for Charriol, and organized by its president **Nedy Tantoco** and staff, the Rizal Ballroom of the Makati Shangri-La Hotel was transformed into a cabaret for dancing.

Four young pairs led the dancing under the direction by tango queen **Becky Garcia**. The luxury brand's president, **Philippe Charriol**, and his chic wife, **Annick**, were the first to be invited to the dance floor.

The dinner-dance brought to an end the two-day Charriol Agency Meeting at the Makati Shangri-La, which brought together business partners from over 40 countries for an update on marketing plans and business strategies.

Charriol shared his vision and direction for the brand and gave delegates a preview of new products, including watches, jewelry and leather accessories, that will debut at the Basel Fair in Switzerland next month.

A timepiece that generated much interest was the St. Tropez Flower, which celebrates the wedding of Coralie, daughter of the Charriols, to her American beau. An injury requiring surgery kept Coralie, the company's vice president, away from the Manila conference.

antoco, Renato Enriquez
ekhar Rangaraj from India

(seated) **PHILIPPE** Charriol and Madame Yusoff of Malaysia; Jack Zemer and son, Nedy Tantoco and Luc Margaritora

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Barangay suspects toxic pollution

SEEING GREEN

Doris Gaskell Nuyda

SINCE January 2001, officials of Barangay Looc, Mandaue City, Cebu, have complained about the hazardous and toxic waste being discharged into the Mactan Channel through a submarine pipe that runs along the coasts, particularly Looc.

The problem was first brought to the attention of barangay officials when investigations of the discharge showed that the pollution came from a seaweed and carageenan plant in Looc, the FMC Marine Colloids (Phil.) Inc. It is a local subsidiary of a United States firm, the FMC Corporation based in Philadelphia, and has been in operation since 1977.

Barangay Looc officials voiced their complaint, elevating it to the Pollution Adjudication Board (PAB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

In her letter addressed to the FMC chief executive officer in the head office in Philadelphia, Barangay Captain Editha F. Cabahug asked for a resolution of this threat to the health of both the environment and people. She also wrote to provincial officials and the DENR expressing her fears and requesting their support.

Cease and desist and temporary restraining orders were issued giving the plant the chance to look at the problem before continuing operations. But the orders were not implemented, and so operations never really stopped.

Making matters worse is talk going around that a foreign government is intervening at very high levels to keep the operations going. If true, this could mean there is more to this carageenan plant than initially discerned.

Cabahug continues to work from the pollution angle, still claiming that the FMC plant is causing children's diseases and fish kills. Even the death of a fisherman is being traced to it.

The barangay police took samples of water from a leak in a discharge pipe for analysis and found that the quality was way below allowable DENR standards. This alone, Cabahug said, was a violation of Philippine environmental laws.

The situation prompted the Barangay Council to ask: What really lies at the end of the pipe that measures 90 meters long and 30 ft. deep? Investigators peering into one such pipe could only describe what they saw as "a black mound."

Were it not for the environmental audit initiated by the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) Philippines Commission on Science, Technology and Environment, with support from the DENR, most Filipinos would not be aware that this toxic problem exists.

The audit results, covering 1,496 municipalities, 115 cities in 79 provinces were submitted to the UN in September and were further reviewed in February in an assessment meeting attended by the UNESCO Philippines' volunteer group that helped in the audit, and the DENR.

Most responses to the audit showed a general concern for the conservation and maintenance of natural resources in the areas under audit. Every now and then, however, a report would come in to dampen the most optimistic spirit, like that of the phenomenal and rare "pygmy forest" in Davao Oriental.

According to the audit, this forest is threatened by the possibility of mining operations to extract the cobalt found there. The pygmy forest is so-called because the trees are stunted due to the cobalt underneath. Remove the cobalt and you destroy the forest.

Clearly, this is cause for apprehension not only for the people of Davao but the entire country. Similar problems are heard all over the archipelago. While we realize that mining is an important industry, its record of sustainability in this country is bad.

Thus, when a barangay official like Editha Cabahug of Looc sends out appeal after appeal to concerned people to help work out a solution to the toxic discharge of a seaweed plant in her area, it should not be regarded as

TITLE/ E2

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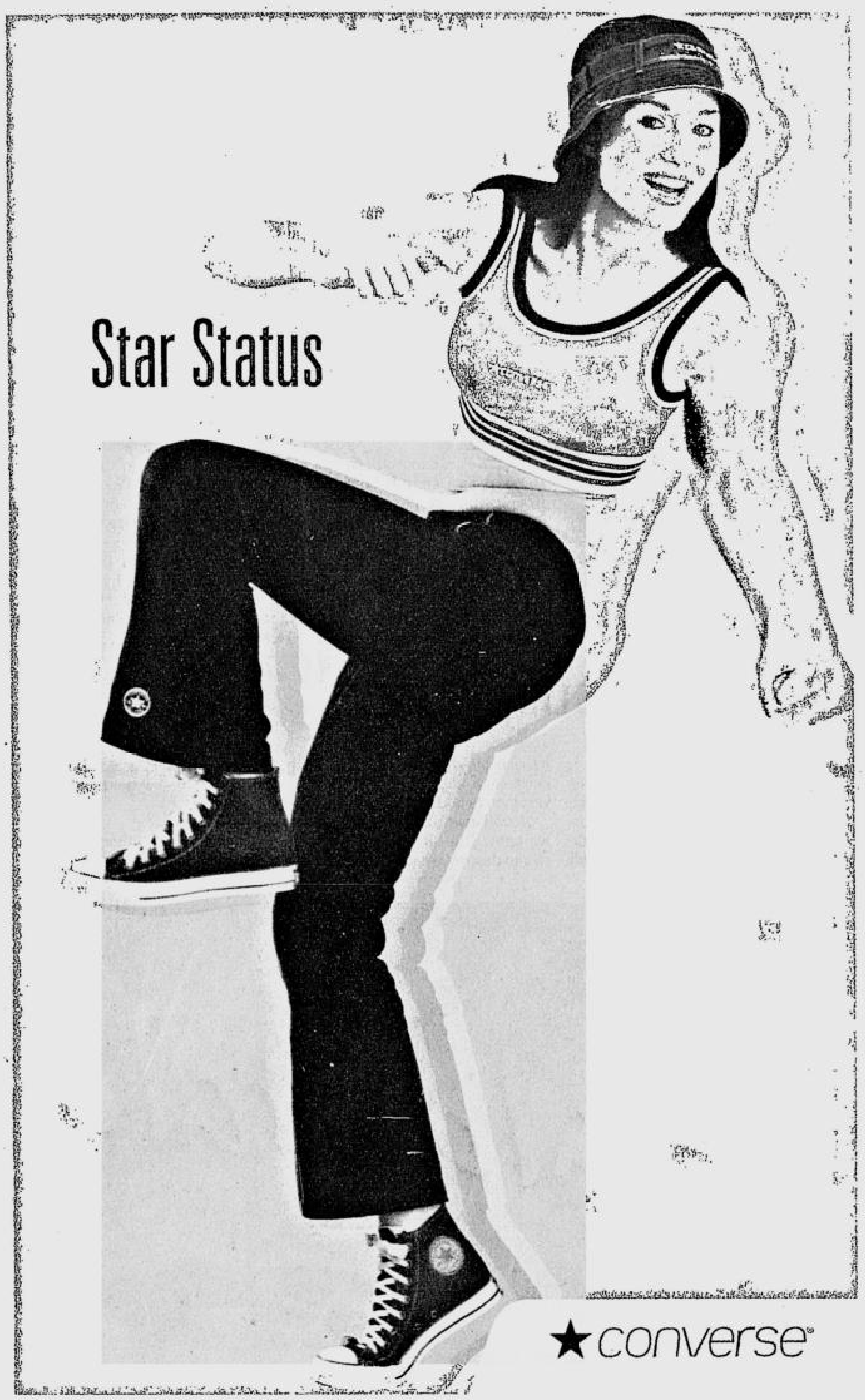

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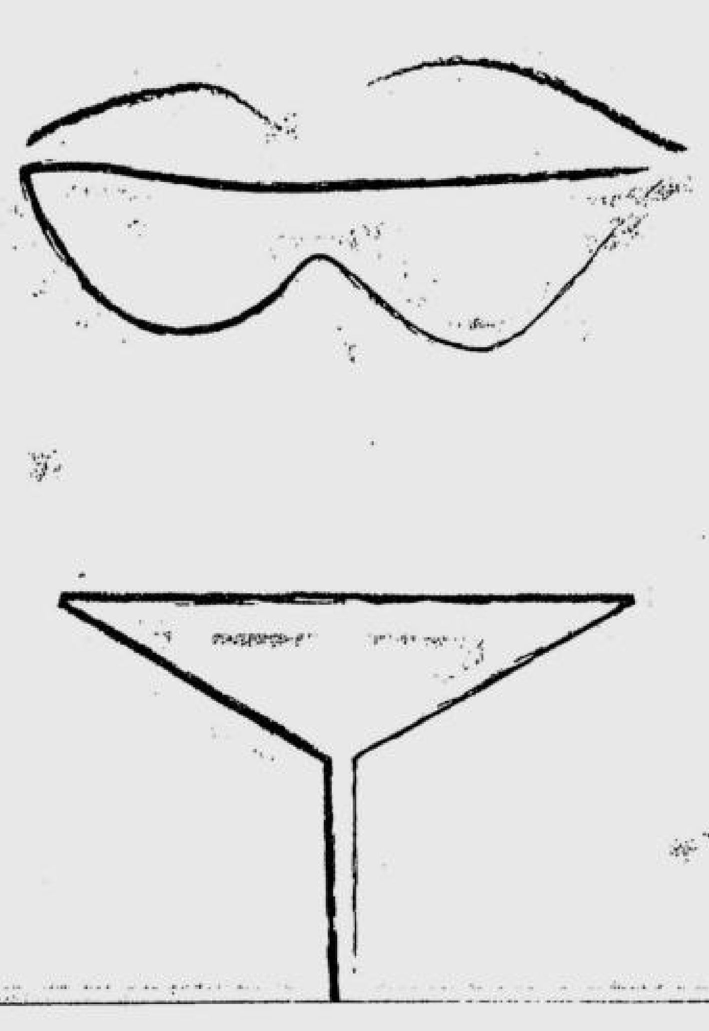

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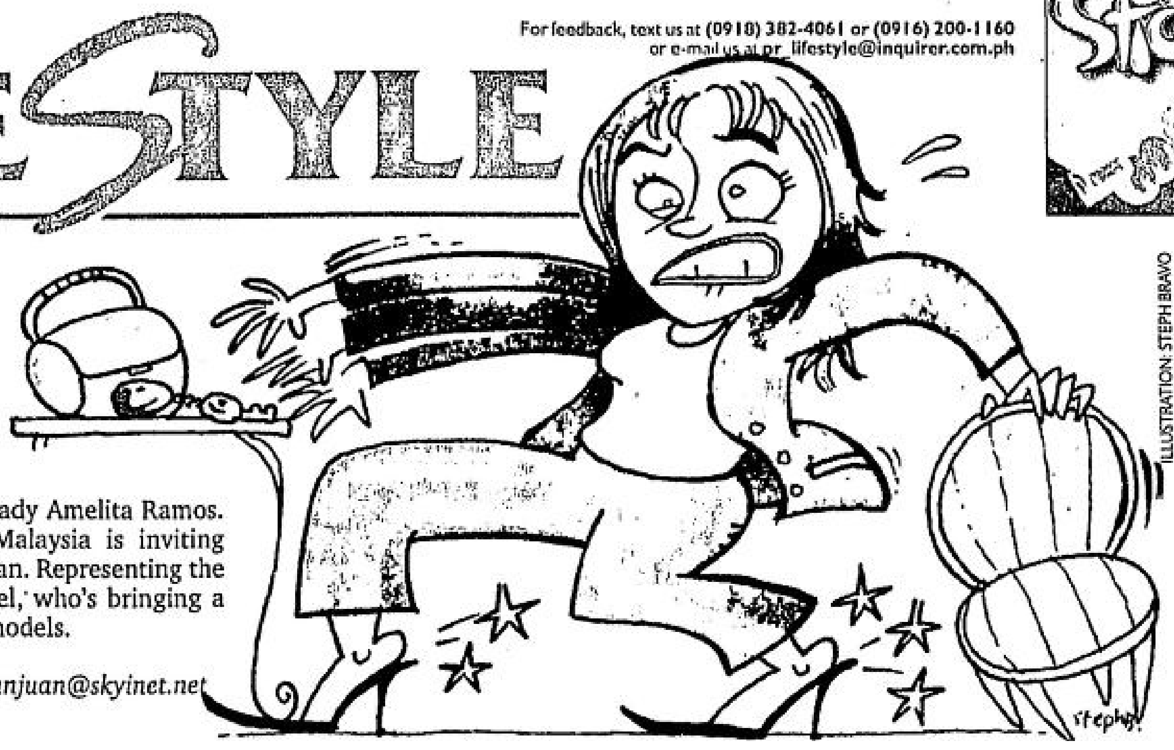

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Stilettos are empowering but they feel like 'five-inch-high torture chambers'

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

ALL RIGHT, death is too strong a word, but it's not really that far from the idea. Anyone who's worn today's stilettos should get the feeling.

While women always say that they'll choose comfort over style, they do the reverse. They choose looking good most of the time.

Nowhere has this been more obvious than when the "stratospheric heels" became the vogue again. Since the four- or five-inch stilettos (higher?) became the fashion statement again, I, like many other women I'm sure, found myself struggling to make the rather crucial decision every morning while dressing up for the schedule ahead. Will it be mobility-but-looking squat or inability-but-seeming statuesque? (Doesn't take much to guess which way things tilt.)

Those needle-thin high heels—whether with mules, pumps or sandals—aside from adding the obvious, are oh so feminine. They complement today's back-to-the-classic-glam look. They make you look statuesque (even if you're rather plump), make your legs seem taller and your feet dainty. In Harper's Bazaar, Tamara Mellon, president of Jimmy Choo, called them "empowering." Valerie Steele, director of the Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology, told Harper's that height "can signify high status."

But oh, how they hurt, no matter the brand. Carrie Bradshaw walking the streets of New York in those towering Manolos—almost 24/7—is just TV, all right? You can wear those heels for two to three hours, but the whole day and up and down the street?! Bazaar had terms for these: "towering bondage shoes," "five-inch-high torture chambers."

Yet girls these days can't seem to do without stilettos. I look around the office and see the staff going about the day's work in those heels, even if they're in jeans. Of course, it's legendary how Anna Wintour of Vogue would literally look down on any of the staff who's not in high heels. If girls everywhere aren't in spikes, they're at least in two-inchers.

As if the high heels aren't killer enough, today's shoes are also pointed as a steeple. So at the end of the day, your toes feel like they've been smashed into a triangle, the balls of your feet hurt, your ankle is strained. Like I said, no matter the brand.

According to a doctor of chiropractic, Ben Adorable, one-half to one-inch is the allowable heels' height. Anything over that, "you add three or four times more pressure on your lower back," said this doctor who trained and practiced in the United States.

High heels put pressure on your toes, and the heavier your weight, the more pressure. They strain your low back, leading to back stress or pain.

Dr. Adorable said, "If you're young, you can tolerate or adjust to it, but in time you'll see the effects."

Our yoga expert in the office, Alya Honasan, tells me that high heels and yoga don't go together. If you're always in heels, your Achilles heel will contract and shorten, and in yoga, you must stretch the heel to keep your balance.

So you don't subject your feet to slow death, limit wearing stilettos to once or twice a week, Dr. Adorable said.

I had a more flexible idea: switch. I step out of the house in my Nike G series or Cole Haan leather almost-flat mules or sequinned Regatta slippers, ignore the guard staring at my glittery slippers, function in the office in those, then when there's lunch or meeting in our Executive Lounge, I switch into high-heeled but broken-in leather Kate Spades. I switch shoes during the day so that the scene underneath my table is beginning to look like a shoe rummage sale. On a really stressful day, I pad around my office barefoot—best way to de-stress the feet.

If you'll just be puttering around the office, with no major business or social appointment, and your office allows it, you can invest in good-looking trainers—neither obtrusive nor threateningly athletic, just in-between stylish and athletic. That was how Nike G at Cole Haan caught my eye—it's pale gray, white and melon orange, no chunky sole, so halfway between corporate and hip.

Unless one is a masochist, one better resort to shoe switches. Nicky Hilton admitted to Harper's that she "kicks off difficult shoes under the table during dinner parties," while another socialite checks in a lower pair of heels at black-tie events.

Style can be suffering indeed. And we're not even talking about push-ups or girdles as if they were super-engineered by Nasa.

Rajo to Malaysia

Forget about Hong Kong or Thailand leaving us behind in fashion. Now Malaysia is holding its equivalent of a fashion week end of April. We used to have our Asean Design Show under then First Lady Amelita Ramos. For its fashion week, Malaysia is inviting countries as far as Pakistan. Representing the Philippines is Rajo Laurel, who's bringing a 12-piece collection and models.

E-mail the author to tsanjuan@skyinet.net

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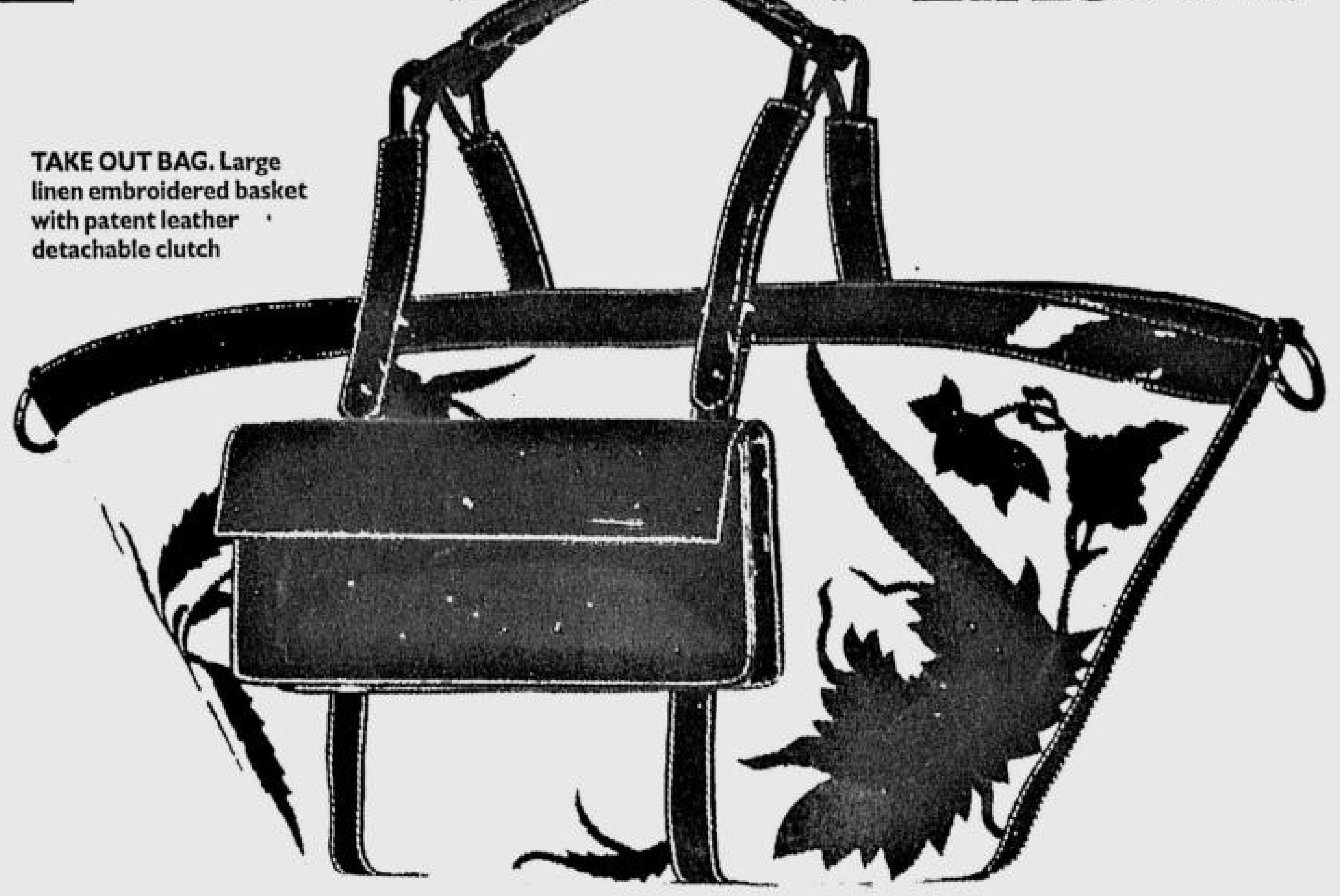
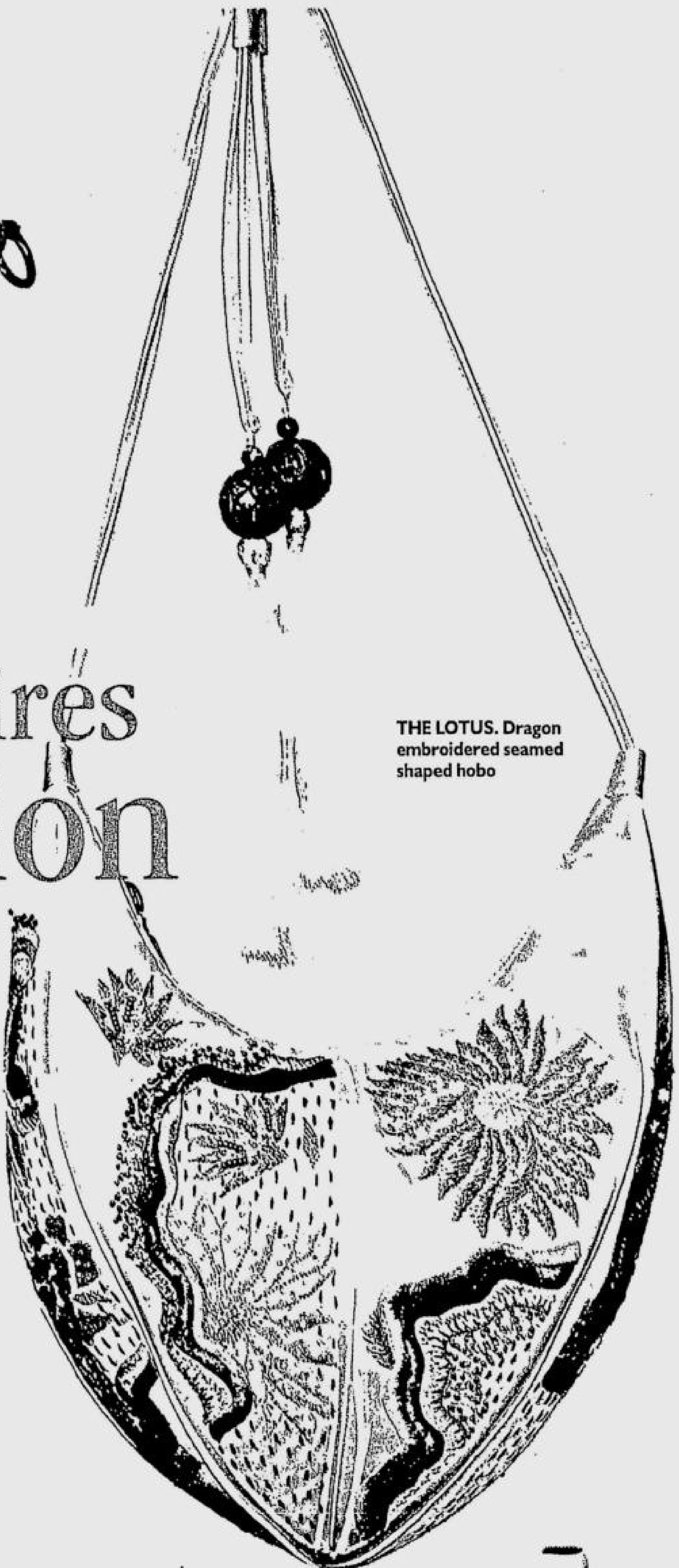


TAKE OUT BAG. Large linen embroidered basket with patent leather detachable clutch



THE LOTUS. Dragon embroidered seamed shaped hobo

Tale of two cities inspires 2004 collection

KYOTO and Palm Beach inspire Josie Natori's Spring/Summer 2004 accessories collection.

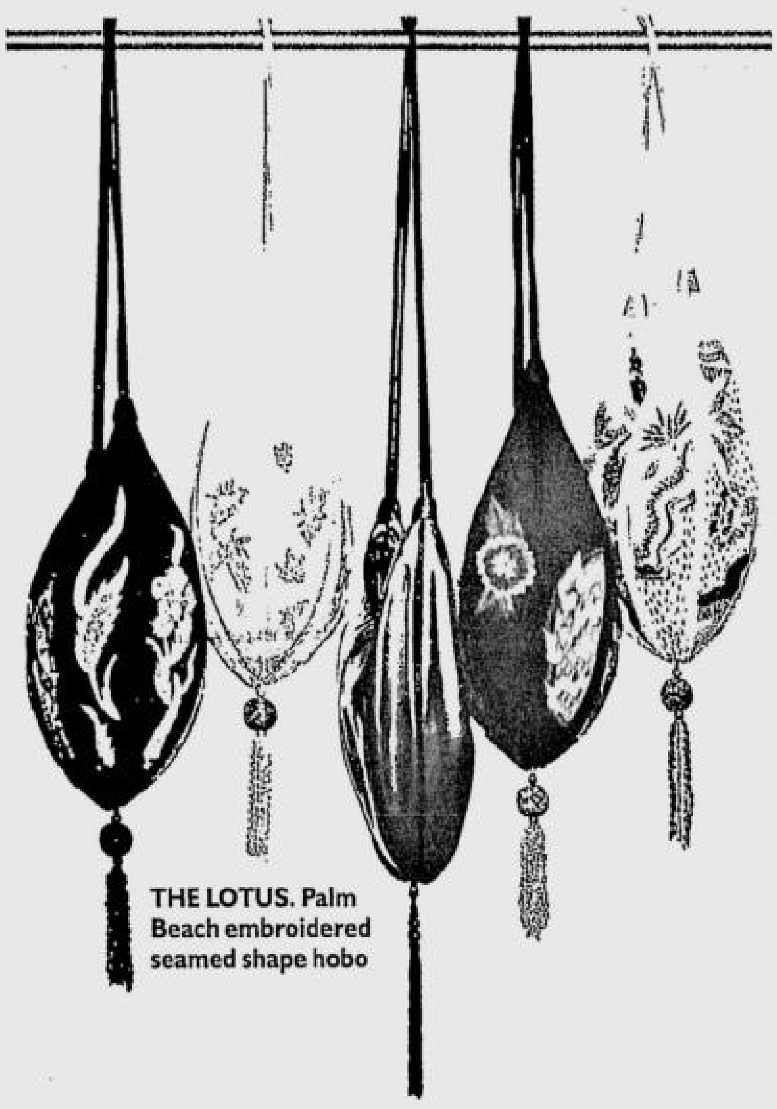
It includes large alligator signature totes, silk chiffon shawls decorated with rosettes, and Uzbek embroidered silk jackets. Pieces are flirty and fun, but with the Natori stamp of luxury, each bag with the designer's distinctive handle.

Colors and textures are highlighted—lime green satchels, purplish-pink mini-Vagabonds, signature tote in alligator, turquoise kimono jackets with tassels, vine embroidered silk cocoons that are peach outside with pink lining.

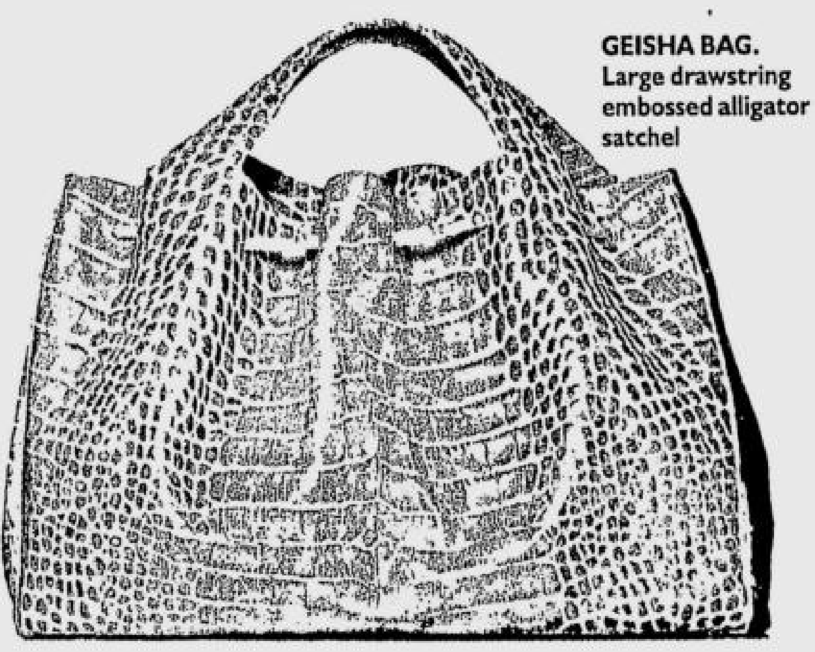
Texture is played up on the richly embroidered shawls and satin clutches.

For those who prefer dramatic black, there are patent leather signature totes and the luxurious East/West embroidered nylon satchel. The Geisha bag is a large drawstring embossed alligator satchel.

The Spring/Summer 2004 accessories collection is exclusively available at Wish, ground floor of the shopping arcade of Makati Shangri-La.



THE LOTUS. Palm Beach embroidered seamed shape hobo



GEISHA BAG. Large drawstring embossed alligator satchel

MESH scarf with rivlets

THE METRO. Woven hopsack clutch

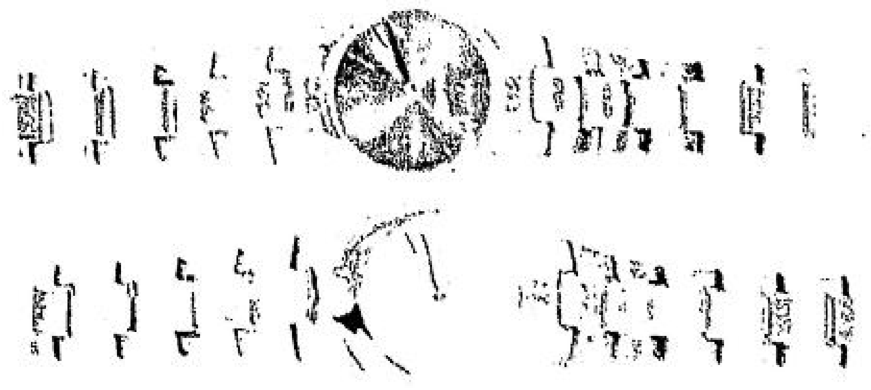
KYOTO embroidered georgette silk shawl

KIMONO jacket with tassels

TONAL embroidered kimono jacket

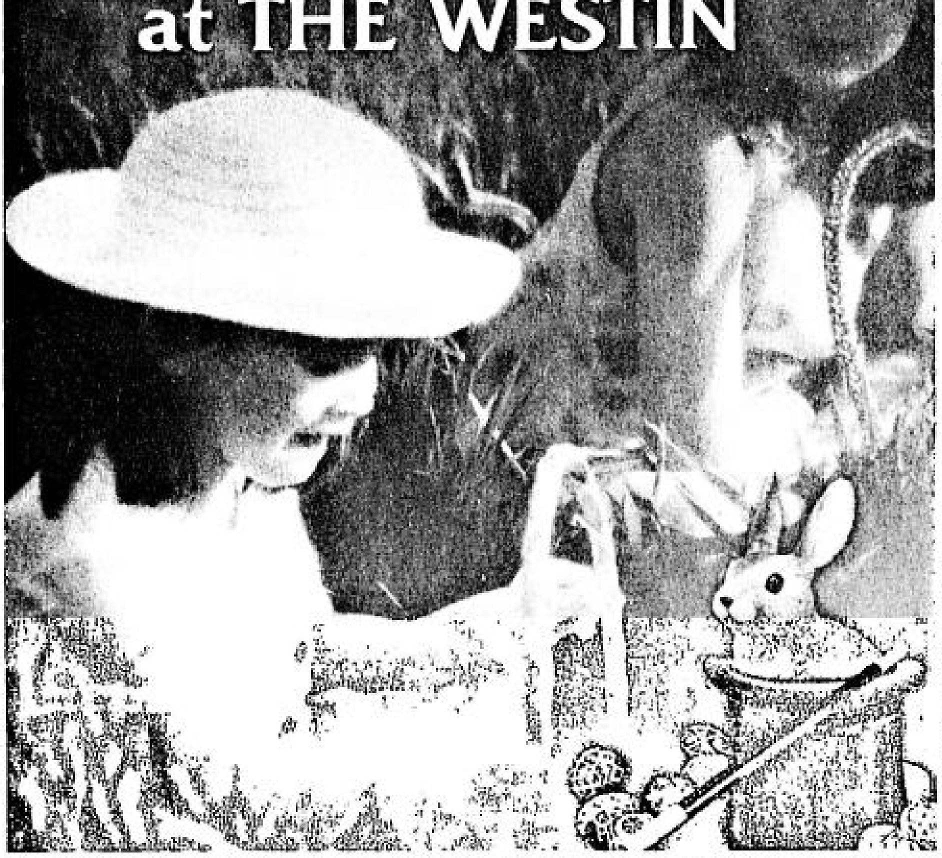
VINE embroidered satin organza

VINE embroidered silk cocoon with contrast lining



SUNFIRE and Moonfire. Esprit Sunfire and Esprit Moonfire timepieces were inspired by the Greek god Helios, god of the sun; Hephaestus, god of fire; and the goddess Selene, goddess of the moon. The timepieces are both elegant and functional. Esprit Timewear is available in fine stores and authorized Esprit dealers nationwide.

Magical Easter at THE WESTIN



Free tickets for 2 adults and 2 kids to the Magical Easter Party at the Sunset Pavilion for guests availing of the room promo from April 2-11 and one ticket for every Easter Brunch Buffet at Cafe Plaza.

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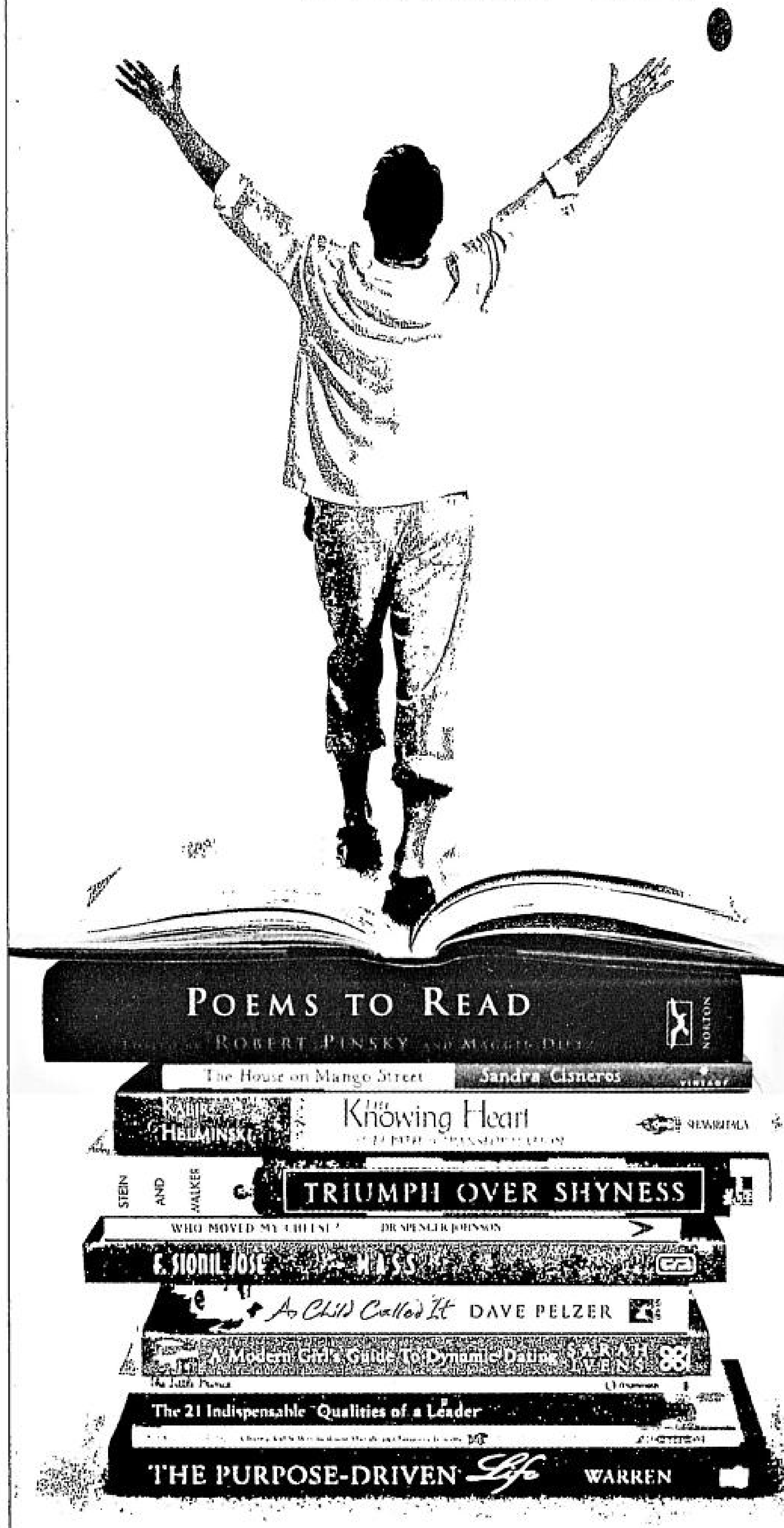
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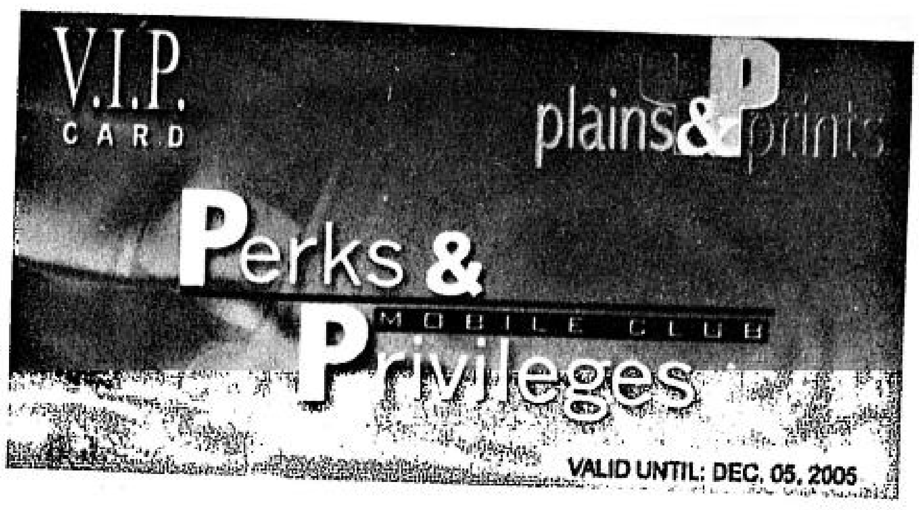

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Imedeen Time Perfection was recently launched in the Philippines and is available at selected department stores and beauty centers. For more information, check out www.imedeen.com.

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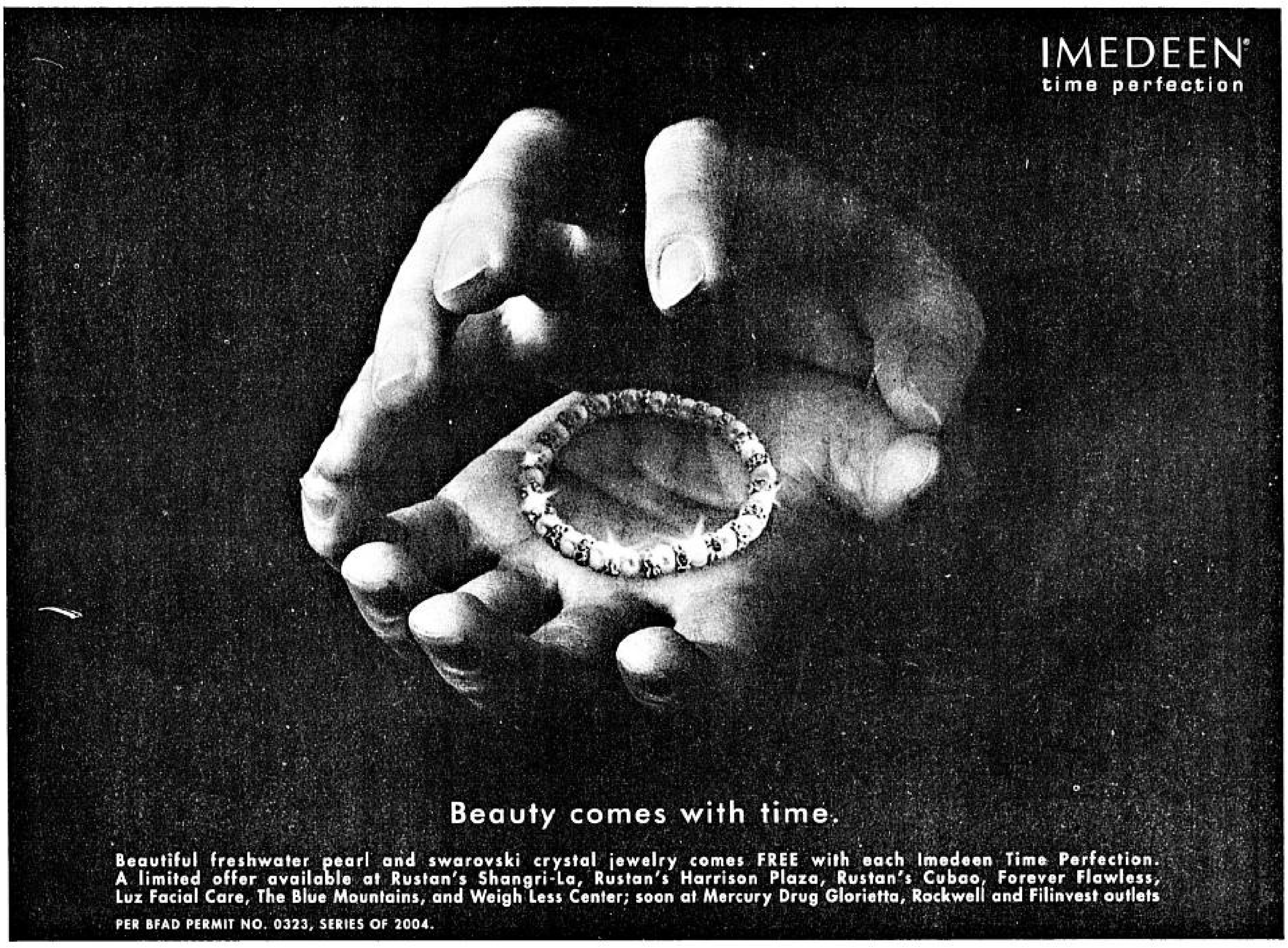

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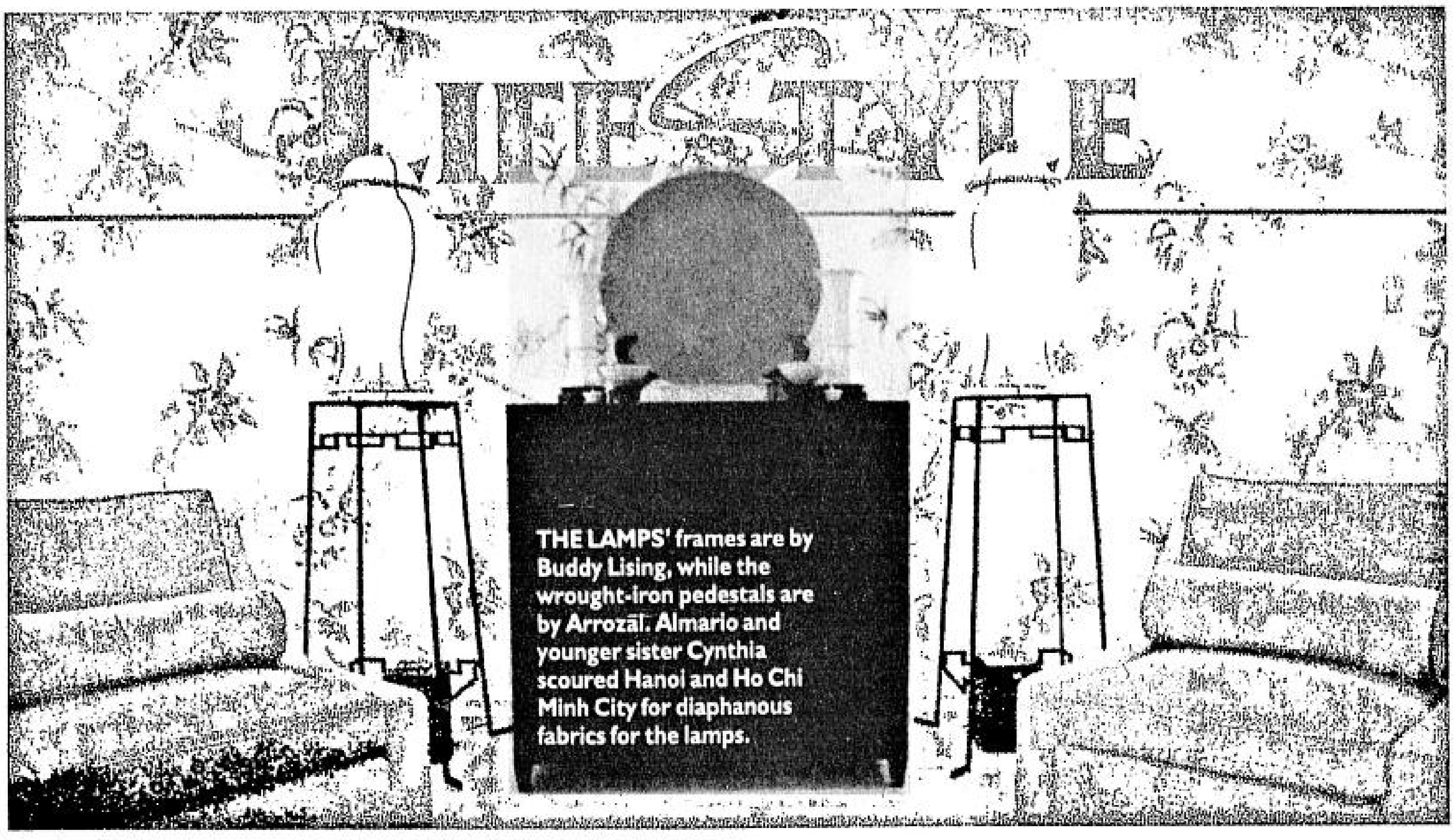

THE LAMPS' frames are by Buddy Lising, while the wrought-iron pedestals are by Arrozāl. Almario and younger sister Cynthia scoured Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City for diaphanous fabrics for the lamps.

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Per DTI NCR Permit #0826 Series of 2004

Indoor garden minus the flora and fauna

Ivy Almario makes over her own home in record time with a little help from her professional friends

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Chito Vecina

IT pays to develop good relations with your partners. During crunch time, they won't think twice about going the extra mile to help you despite their busy schedules.

Interior designer Ivy Almario of Atelier Almario found this out when she raced against time to renovate her drab two-story Makati flat, which she acquired after selling a smaller unit at the Biltmore late last year.

She wanted an indoor garden sans live plants, chirping birds and fluttering butterflies. For that, she had to come up with new furniture and accent pieces to match the flavor and green-and-white color scheme of her preferred theme.

But why the rush?

Her Sydney-based sister, Cecile Modolo, was coming home for the holidays, and the Almarios needed a convenient place to hold a reunion.

It was no joke as Ivy had to make room for seven siblings and their respective families.

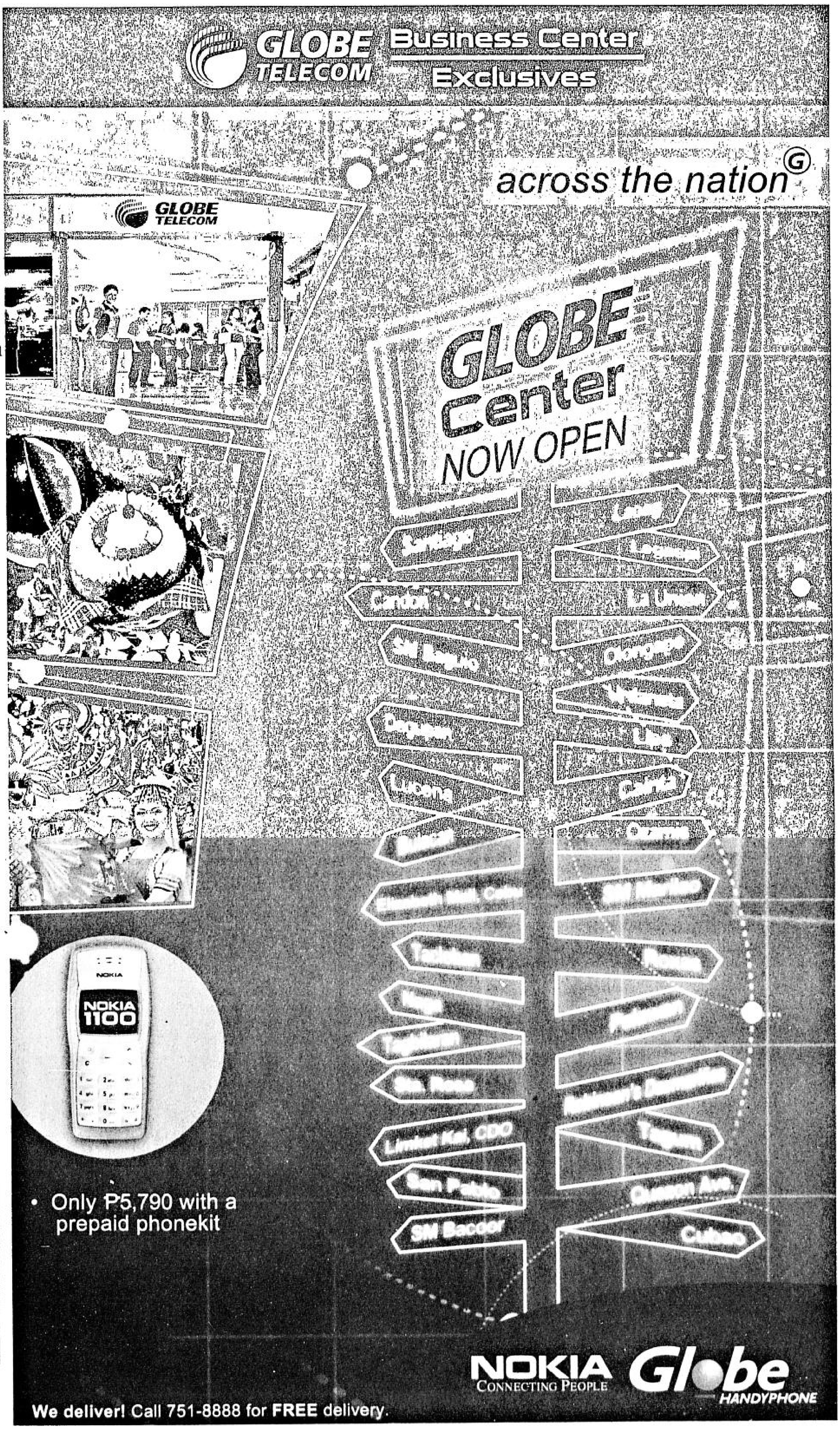
That responsibility fell on Ivy as she summoned the help of her other "family"—her professional partners—to finish the job before Christmas. She couldn't have chosen a worse time.

"Everybody knows that Christmas is a big thing in the Philippines," she explains. "Aside from buying gifts and planning the holiday menu, it's also a time when families spruce up their homes. That's why demand for our services usually hits the roof before the year ends."

So while Ivy attended to her clients, she asked Kristine Datuin, one of Atelier Almario's in-house designers, to manage her house's renovation.

INDOOR/ G2

THE GARDEN feel begins at the condominium unit's foyer and extends to all public areas. Silk curtain in ivory and chartreuse is by Rudy Pardo.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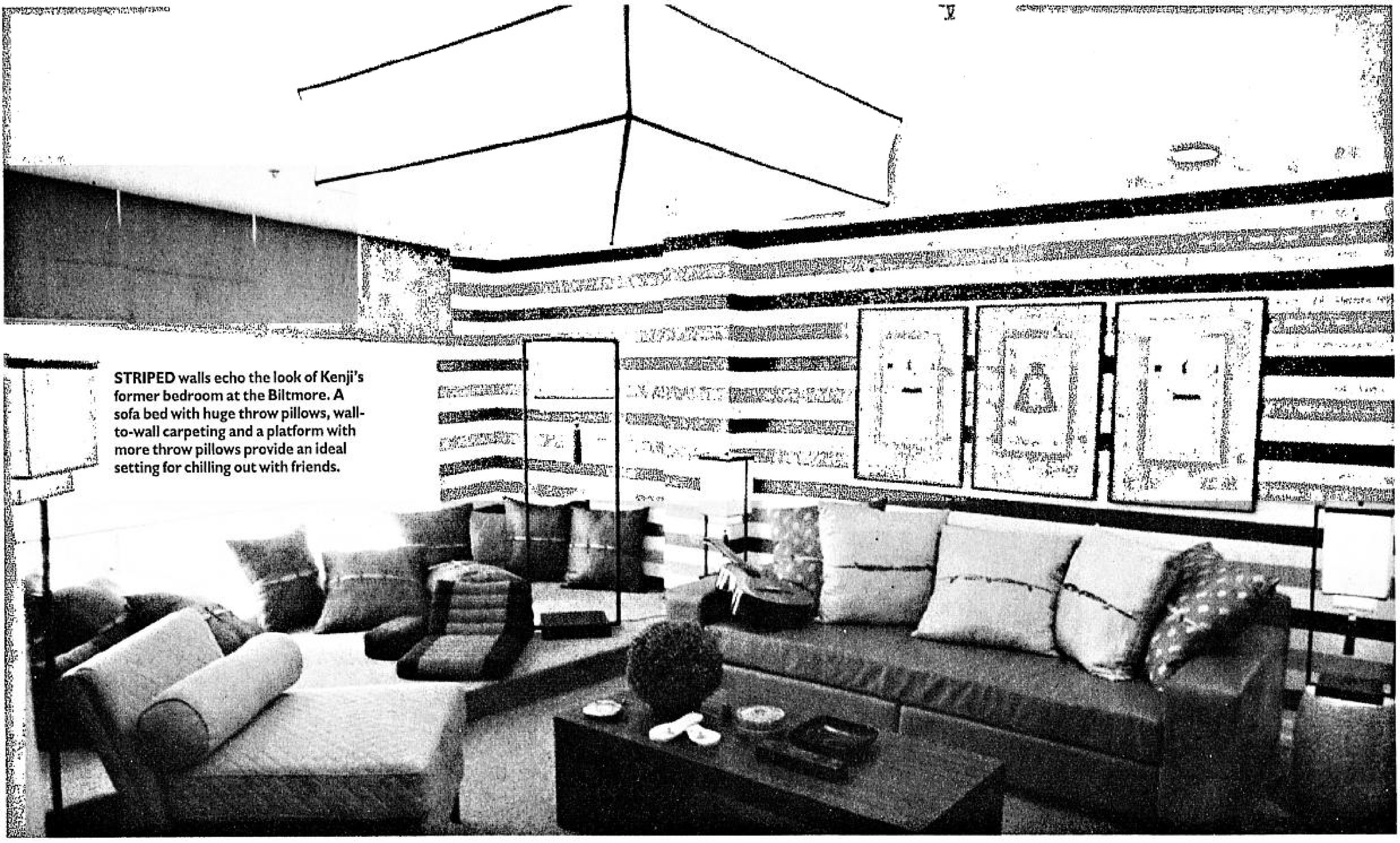
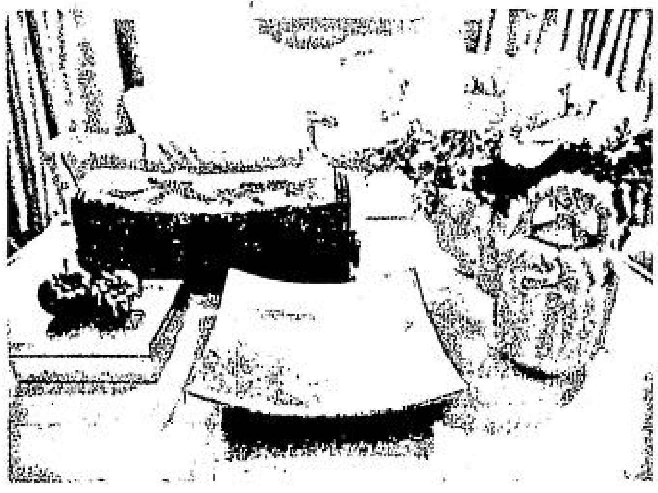


STRIPED walls echo the look of Kenji's former bedroom at the Biltmore. A sofa bed with huge throw pillows, wall-to-wall carpeting and a platform with more throw pillows provide an ideal setting for chilling out with friends.

Indoor garden minus the flora and fauna

AFTER the Excell group gave the walls and ceiling a fresh coat of white, artist Yeye and his team began working on the walls. Almario chose various shades of green from Jim Thompson for her furniture's upholstery.



ECLECTIC accent pieces evoke a Martha Stewart feel.

From page G1

Before work on her unit started, Ivy tapped the services of Excell, Rovitron, Arrozal, Buddy Lising, Rudy Pardo and several others. Although all of them gladly agreed to work on her house, she knew that the project didn't rank high on their priorities.

Free-for-all

Following a systematic schedule was next to impossible as people had to work based on their availability, usually during weekends.

"It was like a free-for-all," says an amused Ivy. "But there seemed to have been some method in the madness since everybody was able to deliver. To my surprise, the unit was ready by Dec. 18."

Ivy's desire to evoke a garden feel is literally written all over the walls in public areas. In lieu of wallpaper, she had people from Excell give the walls and ceiling a fresh coat of white. A certain Yeye and his group of artists then used the walls as their canvas to paint images of plants, flowers and blue jays.

"Since this is a back unit with hardly a view," she says, "I deliberately came up with clean and crisp interiors that resembled a manicured garden to keep people from looking outside. Otherwise, all they'll see are the backs of other buildings just like in Hong Kong."

As the unit is located on the 17th floor, Ivy had the windows secured with iron railings. It was a prudent decision, she says, since friends of Kenji, her teenaged son, often hang out in the unit.

To keep mosquitoes out as well as to filter the light, she had a screen and a series of shades installed in the living room and bedroom windows. Each window in the living room is framed by Pardo's silk drapes in ivory and chartreuse.

Before work on the walls started, Ivy had Excell replace the dark, "generic-looking" baseboards and jambs. The contractor also did the lacquering of doors, new jambs and casings.

The pieces of wood were later recycled into white wainscot or paneling for the kitchen's grass-green walls.

Uncanny

If friends find an uncanny resemblance between the color scheme of the kitchen and that of Mylk's—husband Yong Nieva's fusion restaurant in Greenbelt 3—it was deliberate, Ivy says.

"The joke hasn't been lost on family and friends," she says with a naughty grin. "It seems only Yong wasn't amused at first."

She also tapped the expertise of Rovitron, a floor contractor, to redo the dark parquet floors. After sanding the floors pale, workers concealed them with several coats of "rich" cream paint.

"I really wanted white floors like that of a yacht," says Ivy. "But since I was in a hurry, I had to make do with something tried and tested, which turned out beautifully. People at Rovitron first used this color for the Coach shop's floor in Greenbelt 3."

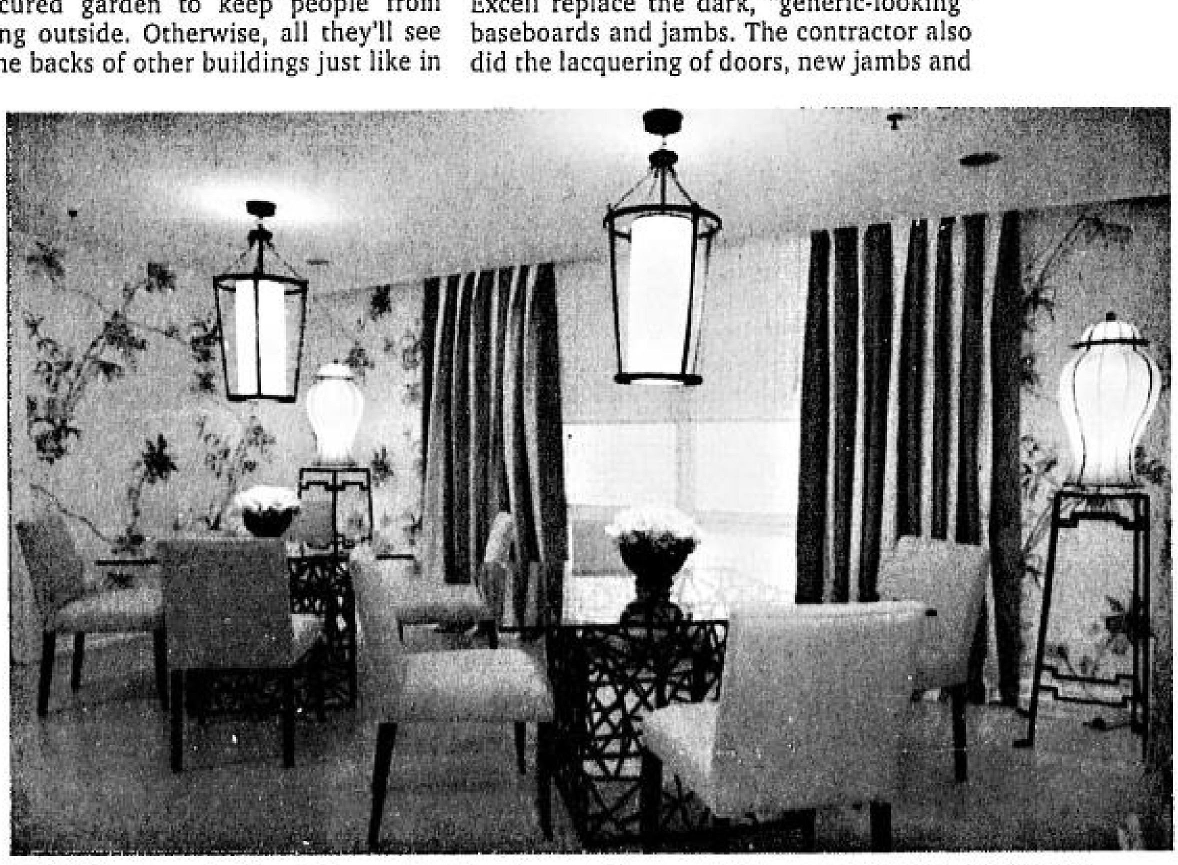
As Ivy and sister Cynthia were often in Thailand and Vietnam sourcing for materials, particularly fabrics,it was no problem to buy curtain and furniture fabrics in various shades of green at Jim Thompson in Bangkok.

Through her furniture suppliers such as Dom Ferrer, Delfinos, Astetik and Danny, Ivy already had a number of her favorite silhouettes in mind that speeded up the unit's makeover. All she had to do was provide the suppliers specifications and they took care of the rest.

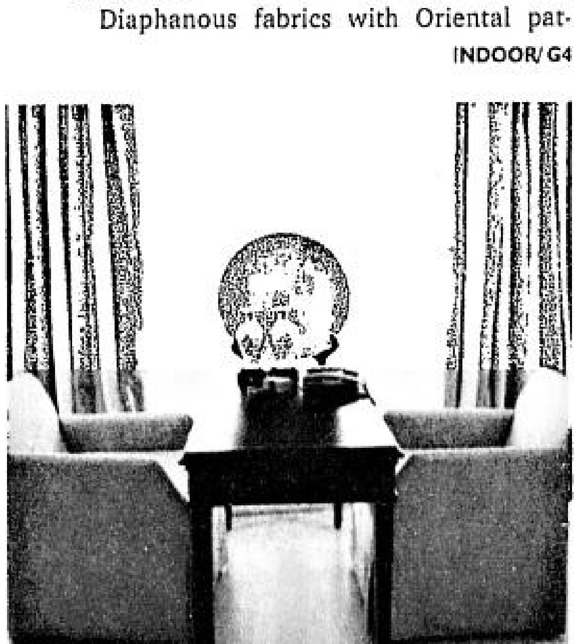
Diaphanous fabrics with Oriental pat-

INDOOR/ G4

ALMARIO mixes her blue and white pieces with faux topiaries by Cynthia.



TWO glass-topped dining tables can be joined as one. The wrought-iron base was made by Arrozal.



THE OVERALL look is clean and crisp with touches of Orientalia.

Her boyfriend only finished high school

LIVE AND LET LIVE

Tita Dulce

DEAR Tita Dulce,

My boyfriend and I have been on for two years now, since we were in fourth year high school. I know he loves me and I love him, and we go on dates but I have not given my virginity to him.

I'll be on my third year in college in June. The problem is, while I am preparing for a career, my boyfriend has not started college and doesn't seem to want to. I am worried that when I graduate, I won't be able to present him to my family.

My family is not rich and there's no pressure on me to get a high achiever for a boyfriend. But I am uneasy with the idea that, someday, it will become obvious that while I am a professional, my husband is only a high school graduate.

Should I continue our relationship or end it now?

DOLLY

I'm glad you raised your problem at this time. Many will soon graduate from high school or college and it's likely several of them are young women in a situation like yours.

There would be people who'd say that what you wrote shows you aren't truly in love with your boyfriend. But I would say you are in love with him, but not blindly—which is a good thing.

People your age still have a lot to accomplish, so you should not sacrifice too much now in the name of love. Otherwise, you will waste the coming years lamenting a mistake and then spend a few more years scrambling to catch up with the rest of the world.

If this early you are already uneasy with the thought that you would be "superior" to your boyfriend/husband, then it's likely that you would later be truly and terribly bothered by it. So it is right that you give it some thought now. What is in your mind might not just be a simple doubt but an alarm bell ringing full blast.

Keep in mind, though, the man does not need a college degree to provide well for his family. All he needs is a strong drive to succeed and earn through honest means. Such a drive is hard to miss in a man engaged in a business or two and is making good. He has such a drive, too, if he is hardly out of a job—or he changes employment not because he was fired but because he found a better job.

A person does not need to sit in the classrooms of the most respected professors to be a learned or educated man. All he needs is an unflagging interest to learn. So he would be reading books, newspapers and quality magazines, or watching news and educational television programs, or listening to informative radio shows, or talking to interesting and learned people.

If your boyfriend exhibits such qualities, then there might be hope for him yet. If, on the other hand, he is often unemployed, and he reads or watches TV or listens to the radio or talks to people mainly for entertainment or only to while away time, then it would be good for you to start unhitching your wagon from his star. That is not to say he will never be a good husband. He might turn out to be one. But you'd be risking too much on a bet that he would be.

Living life, of course, is basically a matter of facing one risk after the other. But unless one wishes to live only for the moment or only for adventure, living a successful and happy life means not having to blame one's self later on. That, in turn, means not creating risks for one's self and facing only the risks that cannot be avoided.

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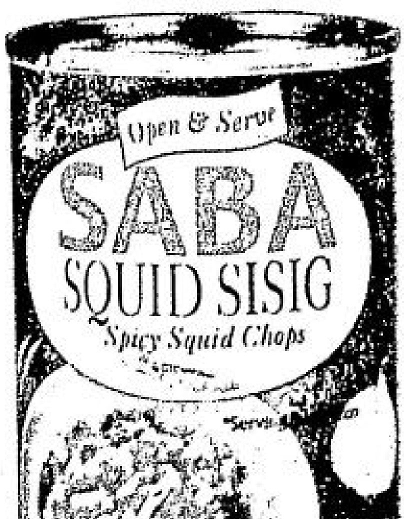

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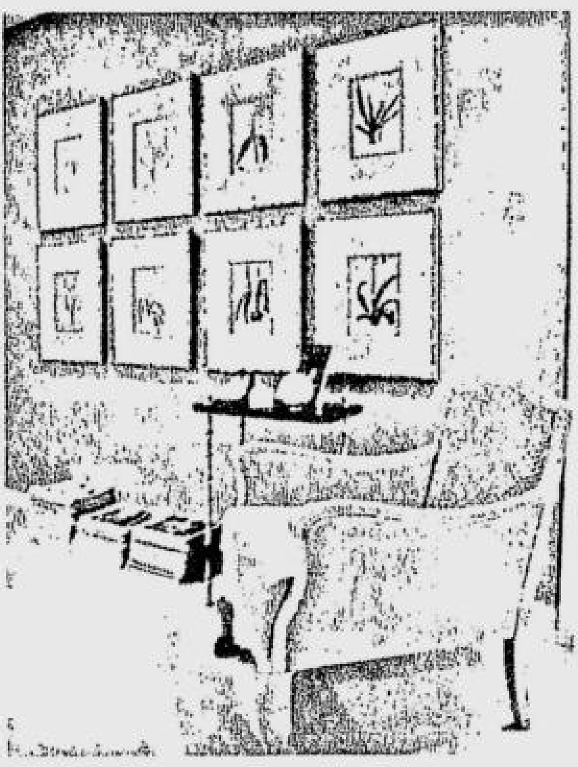
A CHINESE writing desk provides an ideal counterpoint to the master bedroom's New England flavor.



PRINTS of flora were framed by Quintessence.

LANTERNS are echoed in the framed paintings in Mikey's bedroom.

Indoor garden minus the flora and fauna

From page G2

terns from Vietnam ended up in Ivy's trademark lanterns. Vietnam, she swears, is also an ideal source of embroidered linen such as bed sheets, pillowcases and tablecloths.

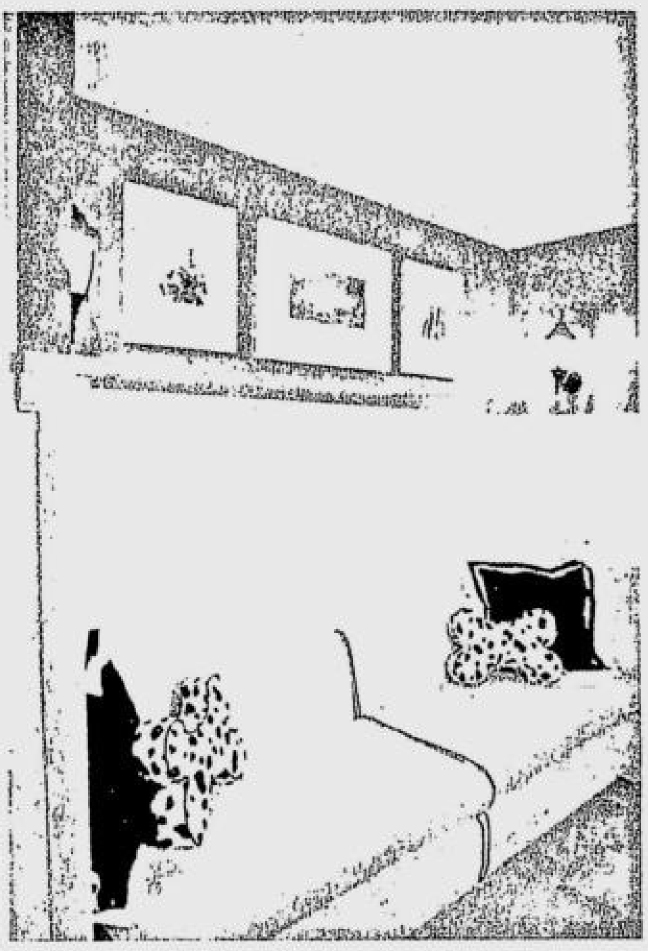
She also tapped the expertise of Buddy Lising, who turned Ivy's Vietnamese fabrics into lanterns after fashioning their frames. Again, Lising culled the shapes from the mistress of the house's favorite pieces.

Cynthia's faux topiaries and flower arrangements further give public areas a fresh garden feel. The theme extends to several printed floral artworks framed by Quintessence and Angelforneas.

Finally, before she was able to move in the furniture, she asked people from Clean and Clear to dust and polish "every square inch" of the unit.

"This unit is more than just another project," says Ivy. "It's a testimony of my good working relationship with partners in the industry. None of this would have been possible without their help." Spoken like a true friend.

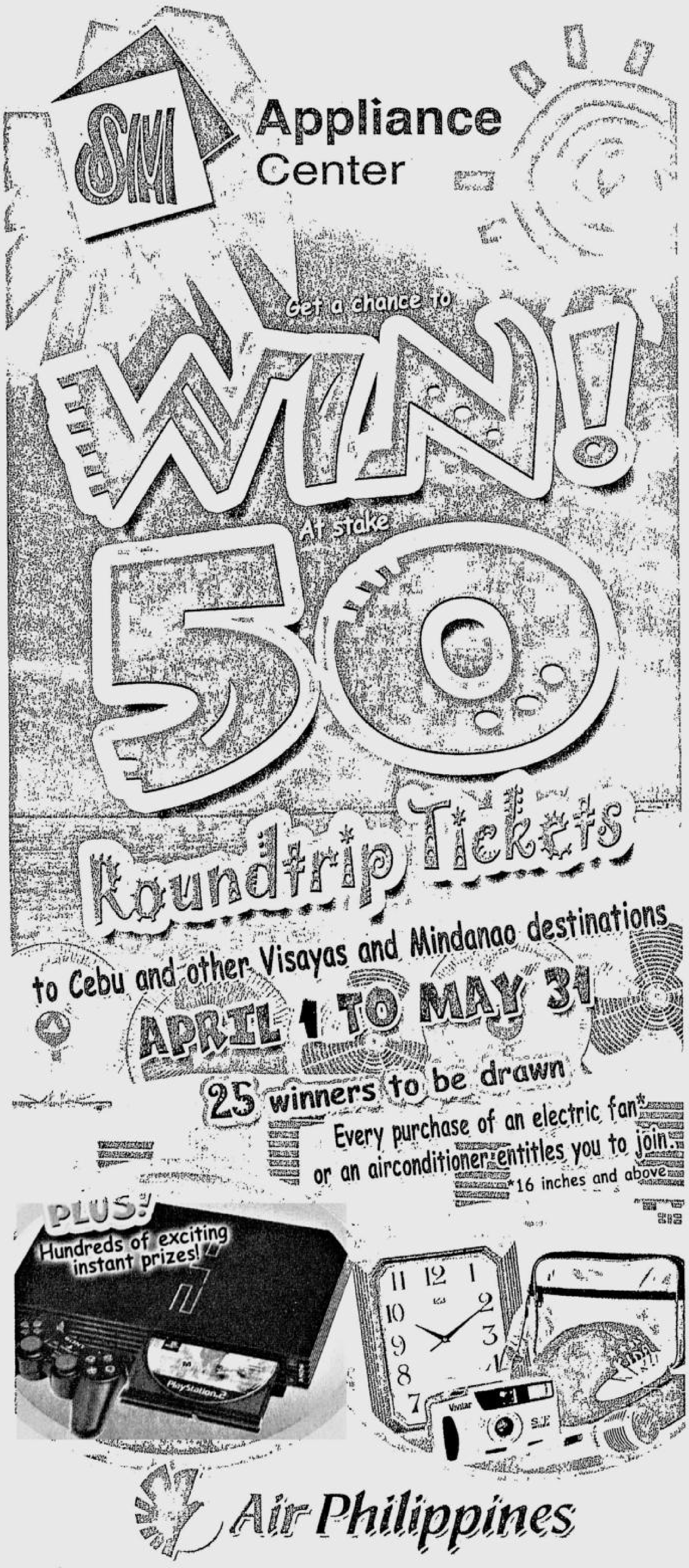
E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph



A SITTING area with wainscot fashioned from recycled wood is one of the kitchen's focal points. Green-and-white color scheme reminds one of Mylk, husband Yong Nieva's Greenbelt 3 restaurant.

IVY Almario and eldest son Kenji

TO WARD off the noise from the neighbor's generator, Almario had the master bedroom's walls upholstered in bluish gray. Frilly canopy for the four-poster bed is quite a departure from her trademark structured style.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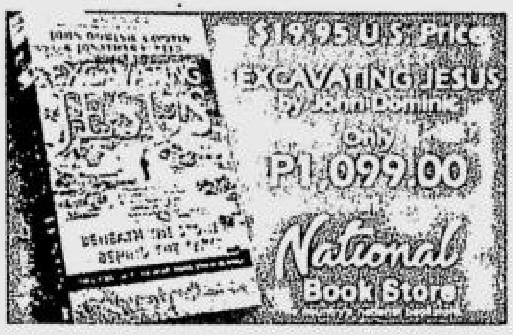

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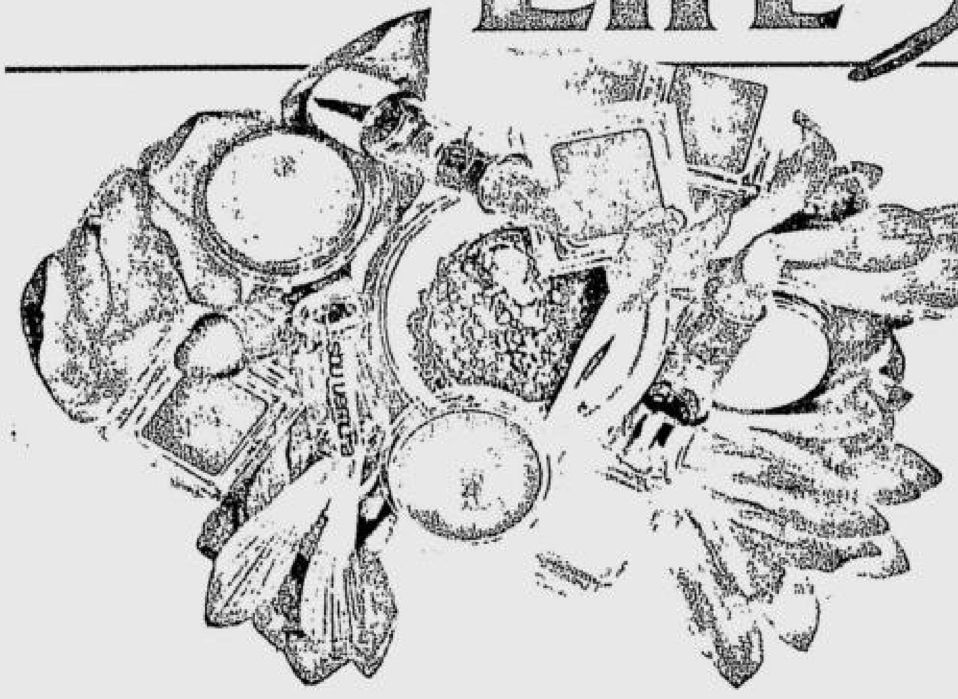


SHU Uemura Paradis

Resort makeup is hot

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

A DISTINCT trend among the spring-summer collections 2004 of some makeup lines is using famous resort getaways as inspiration.

Lancôme: Calypso. I dropped by the Rustan's Makati counter and makeup artist Sam explained that my shimmery beige/bronze lids lined with blue was inspired by the sand meeting the ocean. Never thought I could carry off blue eyeshadow, but mine was decidedly appealing.

The cream blush in Lanawi is my favorite, a sunset orange with yellow and gold iridescence does a fine job accentuating my cheekbones. The intensity can easily be adjusted depending on one's skin color.

My juicy tube of choice is the bronze gold Manihi which not only makes my lips look lusciously nude, it also tastes and smells like Nutella (chocolate hazelnut). Yum!

If you like orange, go for Tahuata, which smells and tastes just like sweet and tart orange.

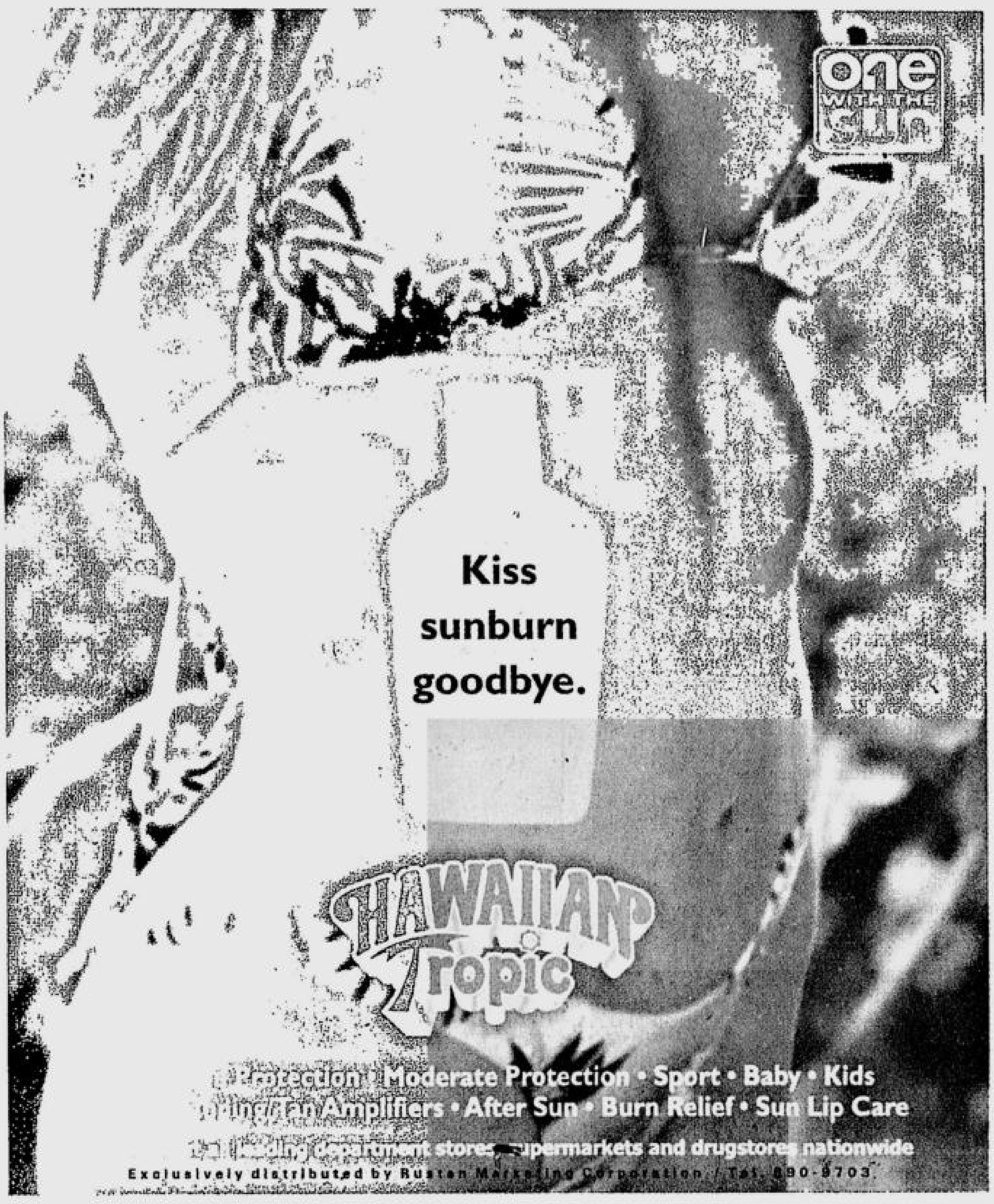
Shu Uemura: Paradis. Talk about walking through a tropical paradise! The eyeshadow shades are: Papaya (bright yellow), Mango (yellow orange), Palm (teal blue) and Lotus (hot pink).

I pick Papaya to brighten my eyes but the bestseller is still Lotus. The powder blush colors are Bird of Paradise (orange with gold iridescence), Water Lily (off-white shimmer) and Pink Hibiscus (rose pink).

My classic recommendation? Red 19 blush looks like a natural flush from within; it looks hot with Papaya eyeshadow and any of the three Rouge lipsticks in this collection which look loud but give a sheer tint to lips. The colors are salmon pink 321 (light), rose pink 335 (medium) and reddish pink 351 (strong). 321 suited my pale yellow-tone skin best; it looks so nude. Electric blue waterproof lengthening mascara completes the look.

MAC: Be Seen. It was a shock for me: MAC talking about showing off one's features by going see-through, sheer and subtle. I usually associate MAC with color, drama and flamboyance. The look is very ethereal much like the elves in "Lord of The Rings." The colors are too many to mention so drop by the counter for inquiries.

RESORT/ H3



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"Unwanted body hair? Not for us."

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Different women. But with a couple of things in common: 1) they're all successful, and 2) they all swear by the effectiveness of Facial Care Centre's LaserLight Hair Removal. Here, they share their various experiences on the troubles, struggles, and their victory over unwanted hair.

Former actress turned Restaurateur Cristina Gonzalez-Romualdez relates her troubles: "The hair on my underarms was such a hassle especially because I have a lot of different things to attend to. Imagine, having to shave everyday... wax every so often...and sometimes when I'm in a hurry, I can't help but get cuts and nicks."

Another actress, Ana Roces, says, "I was really *balbon* (hairy) so I had to wax my upper lip at least twice-a-week. And even then, the hair seemed to come back much faster than that of other women. It was really irritating."

Indeed, they were all dissatisfied with their old hair removal methods, having found them as insufficient solutions to their unwanted body hair problems. Now, grateful to have found LaserLight, they can't help but compare its remarkable results.

Actress/Interior Design Consultant Carmi Martin has this to say, "I used to wax or shave my underarms about three times-a-week. It was so much hassle. And it resulted in 'chicken skin'! But with LaserLight, there was no more chicken skin. My underarms became so smooth. I was very happy. I really like it."

Popular disc jockey Delamar also says, "With cold wax (which I used to remove my underarm hair before), I only get 5 days of hair-free underarms. After that, the hair starts growing back and I'm in trouble again. The time between waxing sessions is the worst. I couldn't wear sleeveless because I had to let the hair grow so I can wax it again. Luckily, with LaserLight I don't have to go through all that. It has been more than a month since my last treatment and still there's no hair. And if ever there'd be a regrowth, it would be so fine...you won't notice it unless you really look closely. So now I proudly flaunt my underarms anytime."

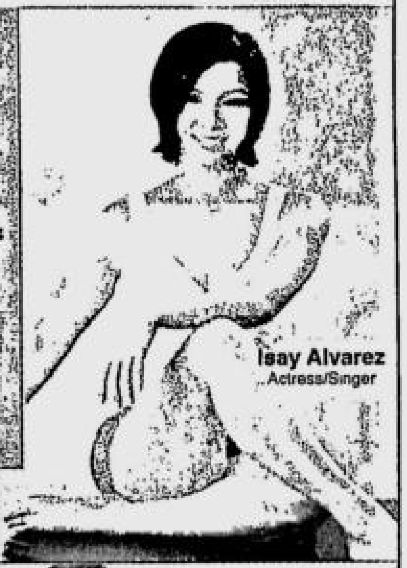
Makeup Artist Barbie Chan recounts her own story: "I was obsessed about getting rid of my underarm hair. Waxing, plucking, threading...name it, I've done it. But they can't keep the hair gone for long and they even made my underarms dark,sometimes even greenish in color. It really freaked me out! I used creams and different products to lighten my underarms but to no avail. That's why I was more than happy when I had LaserLight Hair Removal. It didn't only get rid of my unwanted hair for good -- it also whitened my underarms! Now, even total strangers at the gym approach me and ask what I did to have such soft, white, hair-free underarms. They would even ask me if they could take a closer look. I just raise my arms and proudly announce -- I had LaserLight!"

"I'm really happy with the results: softer...smoother...whiter skin. It's really worth it."

"LaserLight is definitely 100% effective. For us actors, it's really one of the greatest things to come along."

Cristina Gonzalez-Romualdez
Former Actress/Restaurateur

Ana Roces
Actress



Isay Alvarez
Actress/Singer

Delamar
Disc Jockey

Carmi Martin
Actress/Interior Design Consultant

Barbie Cha
Makeup Arti

LaserLight is truly the only treatment that gave these women complete satisfaction. As Actress/Singer Isay Alvarez says, "LaserLight is definitely 100% effective. For us actors, it's really one of the greatest things to come along."

According to Ana, "For someone like me who's really *balbon*, I had to undergo more treatment sessions to get rid of the unwanted hair completely. But after everything, knowing that it's not gonna go back makes it all worth it."

Cristina adds, "I'm really happy with LaserLight -- very happy. I always recommend it because the result is for life. Imagine, no more shaving...no more waxing...no more hassle it really saves time and everything. Plus the results: softer...smoother...whiter skin. It's really worth it."

So if you're seriously considering getting rid of your unsightly, unwanted body hair...then don't think twice! Go for the LaserLight Hair Removal now. It's the only FDA-approved treatment for the permanent reduction of unsightly, unwanted hair anywhere on your body. So you'll have nothing but silky-smooth, hair-free skin. For a **FREE consultation just call Facial Care Centre at**

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In Europe and the United States, wrinkles are a major concern of three out of four women; women ages between 35 and 45 consider them at the top of the list.

In Asia, women worry about wrinkles only when they begin to appear at 45. But first lines are a major preoccupation.

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tion,

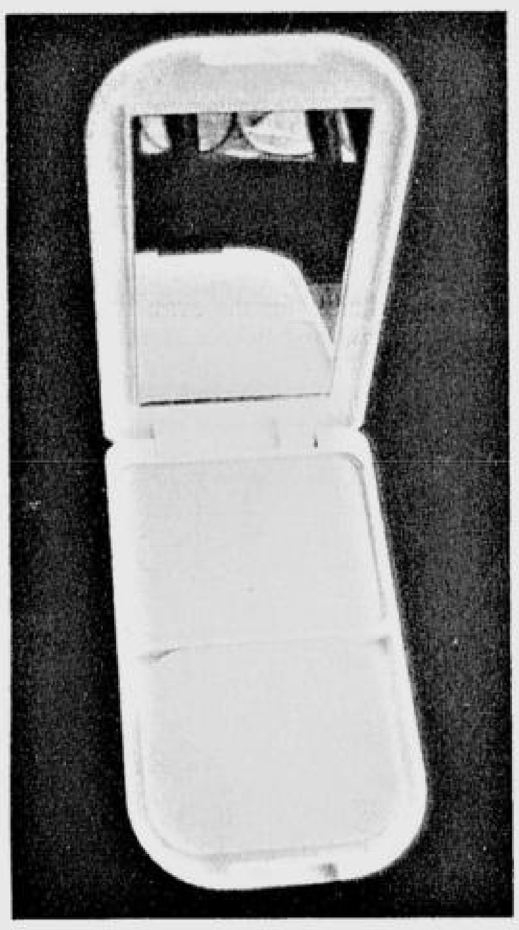
Free makeup advice

BEAUTY Bar offers this month complimentary makeup consultation from celebrity makeup artists of Emphasis Salon.

Get the season's look from Smashbox, as DJ Steve Mills spins your favorite hip hop and R&B music. Keep a souvenir of your new look with a photo courtesy of Hewlett Packard and get free product samples from Beauty Bar.

Schedule your makeover in time for a special occasion or simply to perk you up.

Beauty Bar consultation at Alabang Town Center is available 4-7 p.m. on April 3 and 4.



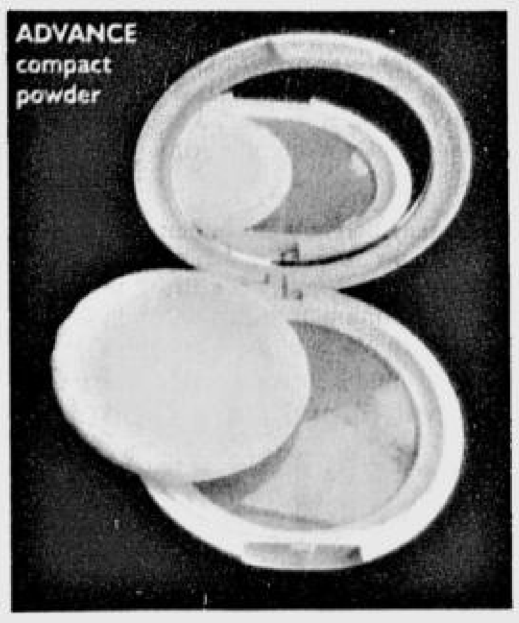
ADVANCE foundation

New cosmetics products

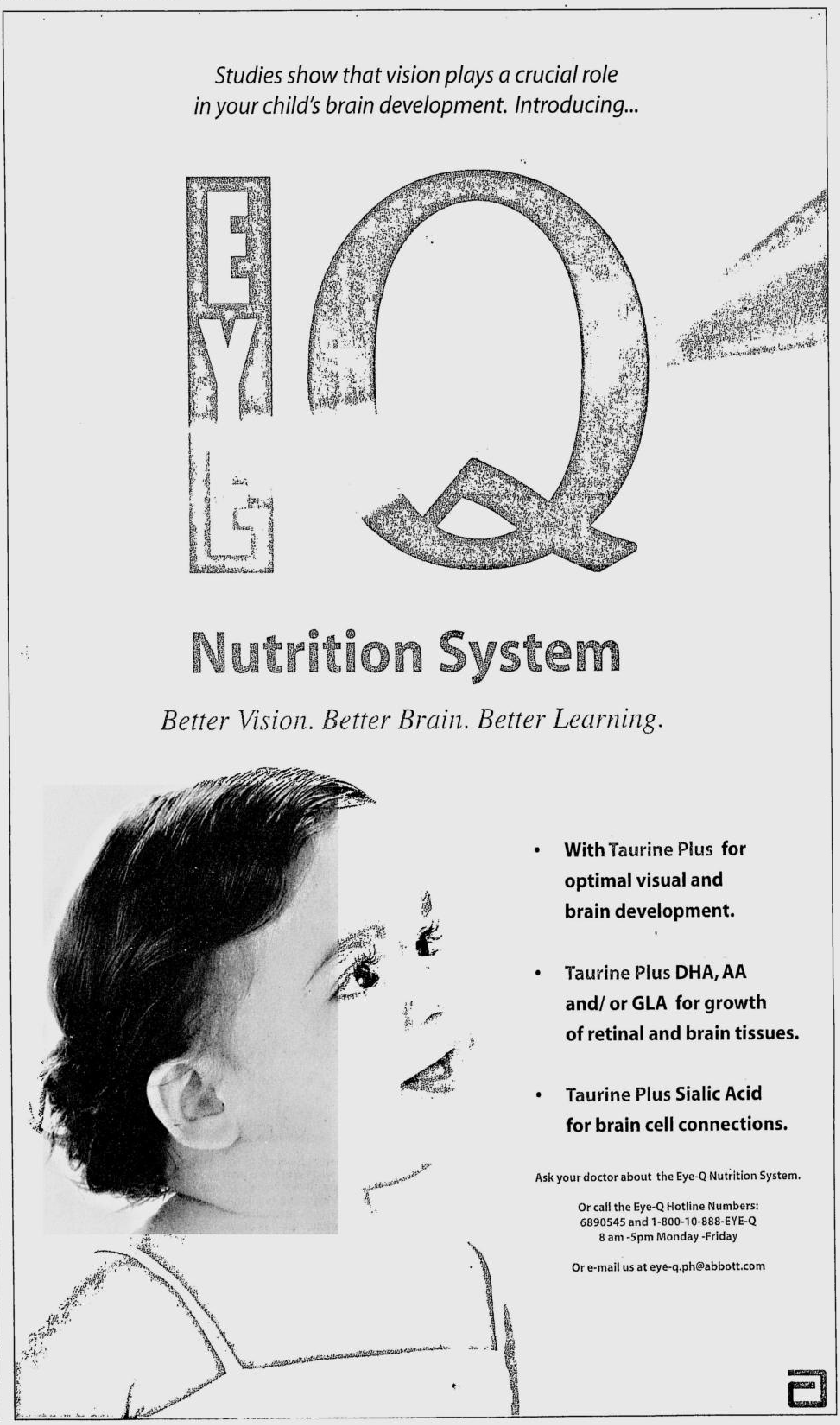
DSS Productmakers Inc., distributor of Ever Bilena, is launching four new products called Ever Bilena Advance.

Established in 1983, the brand has carved a niche for itself in the cosmetics market. Ever Bilena products are widely available nationwide.

ADVANCE shine lipstick



ADVANCE compact powder


Studies show that vision plays a crucial role in your child's brain development. Introducing...

EYE Q

Nutrition System

Better Vision. Better Brain. Better Learning.

- **With Taurine Plus for optimal visual and brain development.**
- **Taurine Plus DHA, AA and/ or GLA for growth of retinal and brain tissues.**
- **Taurine Plus Sialic Acid for brain cell connections.**

Ask your doctor about the Eye-Q Nutrition System.

Or call the Eye-Q Hotline Numbers:
6890545 and 1-800-10-888-EYE-Q
8 am -5pm Monday -Friday

Or e-mail us at eye-q.ph@abbott.com

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easing the creasing action

hoto-aging (deterioration of skin due to exposure to UV's) and hronological aging, when the of the skin and metabolism al-ll replenishment slows down in dermis, and dermal fibers break

rd major cause of cutaneous ag-reasing action, caused simply by vement of your face!

ing action

after year, through the simple act hing, frowning or just worrying, s set in.

most advanced research has iso-e key role played by creasing ac-hich may happen up to 15,000 times a day, marking the surface of the skin in the process.

Wrinkles appear at a perpendicular angle to the facial muscle contraction. Horizontal wrinkles around the eyes are known as "crow's feet." Wrinkles around the corners of the mouth are "laughter lines." Those on the forehead produce a "furrowed brow." There are also the wrinkles to be found running from the edge of the nose to the mouth (sillon nasogenien).

With facial movement, muscles contract and de-contract. This provokes movement of the skin which reverberates down to the fibers of the dermis. The fibroblasts contract and de-contract, following the movement of the muscle. These movements create the creasing action responsible for the formation of deep-set wrinkles.

Lancôme's Résolution has D-Contraxol, a comprehensive anti-wrinkle treatment. It relaxes the skin, inhibiting creasing action and visibly reducing wrinkles—however deep-set these may be.

Top 3 ingredients

D-Contraxol relaxes by working at the heart of fibroblasts to significantly reduce wrinkles.

When creasing action occurs, the fibers around the fibroblasts contract. Like the fibers anchored on the collagen and elastin, the fibroblasts tear at these fibers while contracting, hollowing out the wrinkle.

With age, fibroblasts become more and more sensitive to the tension. While the skin is young, this tension has no lasting effect on the skin. But with age, the dermis becomes less firm. It suffers creasing actions.

The D-Contraxol technology significantly impedes contraction of the skin cellular network. Relaxed or "de-contracted," skin returns to its original condition.

Resolution also has the precursor to Rétinol (Vitamin A), the active anti-wrinkle agent which is responsible for cell development. The nano-encapsulation of Rétinol palmitate promotes a marked improvement in the penetrative action of Vitamin A.

Resolution also has anti-elastase. With the passing of time, collagen and elastin fibers alter and skin loses its elasticity. This deterioration begins with the elastin which is more fragile than collagen. A single enzyme, elastase, is to blame. Anti-elastase, present in Resolution, inhibits the effects of elastase.

Resolution also employs the Skinfiber technology. It includes for the first time textile fibers introduced into a cream base.

The light formula has a fine texture and slightly gel-like consistency. It is perfumed to evoke relaxation and well-being.

Visual play for you and your baby

EYE Q
Nutrition System

Better Vision.
Better Brain.
Better Learning.

The eyes – windows to your baby's mind

Scientific studies show that visual stimulation greatly affects the development of your baby's mind. At birth, your baby's brain is still disorganized and not well connected. To make all the necessary connections for more complex thinking when she grows up, she needs a lot of stimulation from the different senses. Of the five senses, vision is the least developed. This is because a newborn's retina - the back layer of the eyes that translates visual images to brain signals, is not yet fully functional. It can only see contrasts between light and dark, or black and white. Pastel colors appear blurred. To stimulate your baby's vision, expose her to objects with high contrasting colors and shades. This type of visual input makes the retina, the optic nerves and the visual cortex of your baby's brain grow at a much faster rate.

Visual play for your baby

Stimulating your baby's vision is not as hard or as complicated as you may think. Simple, everyday activities can turn out to be visually stimulating experiences for your baby and fun for you as well.

- Remember that babies spend a lot of time looking at things around them. Find out your baby's favorite gaze position and place interesting pictures or objects here for her to look at. You may want to try pictures with geometric patterns or hand-drawn faces in bright colors.
- Babies love to look at themselves. Bring a mirror close to her face and let her look at her facial expressions and gestures.
- Show her books with simple, but boldly colored drawings. Read to her in a high-pitched voice and in an animated fashion. If possible, wave your hands and fingers near her face to encourage visual tracking.

- Place toys or objects she likes in front of her then cover them with a cloth. Check to see if she will remove the cover or look for the toy underneath. Do this several times to introduce to your baby the concept of object permanence.
- Above all else, your baby loves to look at your face. Cuddling, kissing and rubbing your nose against hers often provide countless hours of fun, delight and bonding between the two of you.

EYE Q
Nutrition System

Nutrition with a difference

Your child's first years are crucial and pivotal for her brain. This intense period of brain growth happens only once in her lifetime so getting her off to a good start is important. Now, more than ever, she needs the best nutrition to help her gain the advantage.

The Eye-Q Nutrition System is a unique combination of nutrients proven to promote optimal visual and brain development.

It contains Taurine Plus for better brain and vision. Taurine Plus DHA, AA and/or GLA for growth of retinal and brain tissues. Taurine Plus Sialic acid for better brain cell connections.

MAC: Be Seen sheer collection

Resort makeup is hot

From page H1

My color choices for the eyes: Look See (soft beige pink) and Behold (brown grey) eyeshadows (P750), Clear Brow set (P690), and Pro lash mascara in Black (P660). For lips: Lustre formula's Politely Pink Lipstick (sheer dirty pink frost, P750).

Chanel: Aqua Lumiere Lipsticks with SPF 15. Admit it. A lot of you just buy lipsticks to update your look. You are not alone! The late Coco Chanel, who was way ahead of her time, never left home without lipstick. She believed it was the ultimate weapon for seduction (I do, too).

Aqua Lumiere was created for the woman who loves summer sun, sea and sports. The 15 colors—ranging from beige to plum to mauve— have a semi-sheer finish and ingredients that act as lip balm to the driest lips: shea butter that protects and nourishes lips, Vitamin E which has anti-aging properties, and Lipopeptide, which gives lips added volume.

Shade names: Antigua (copper red), Waikiki (satin desert rose), Tijuana (copper brick red), Key Largo (iridescent pink ribbon), Bora Bora (light brown with golden copper), Bahia (liquid chocolate), Tahiti (sienna brick), Macao (glowing red), Ipanema (peach pearl), Acapulco (doll pink), Casablanca (burnt claret), Hawaii (golden orange), Portofino (bitter pomegranate), Yucatan (beige moiré), and Copacabana (luminous parma).

Clarins: Colour quench lip balm in six flavored shimmer shades. At only P675, this is undoubtedly the most reasonably priced among chic department store brands. It is actually way cheaper here than it is in the US because Rustan's gets it direct from Europe. The line consists of 01 Butterscotch (gold), 02 Maple (rich golden brown), 03 strawberry (old rose), 04 watermelon, 05 cherry (rich red), and 06 plum (red violet). My shades of choice are 02, 04 and 05. The tip is slanted like Lancôme's Juicy Tubes for easier contour and application on the lip.

CHANEL: Aqua Lumiere Lipsticks with SPF 15.

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34th ANNIVERSARY BLOW-OUT

SUPER VALUE SALE
ALSO HAPPENING AT

MAKATI Supermart ALABANG

Theater Drive cor. Commerce Ave., Alabang Town Center,
Alabang-Zapote Road, Alabang, Muntinlupa
Tels. 850-7687 • 807-2208 • Store Hours: 9:30 am - 8:30 pm

UniMart

Greenhills Shopping Center
Tels. 721-05-92 • 721-06-12 • Store hours: 9:30 am - 8:00 pm

CASH & CARRY SUPERMARKET

Buendia cor South Superhighway
Tels. 844-7386 • 843-7382 • 843-3469
Store hours: 9:30 am - 8:00 pm

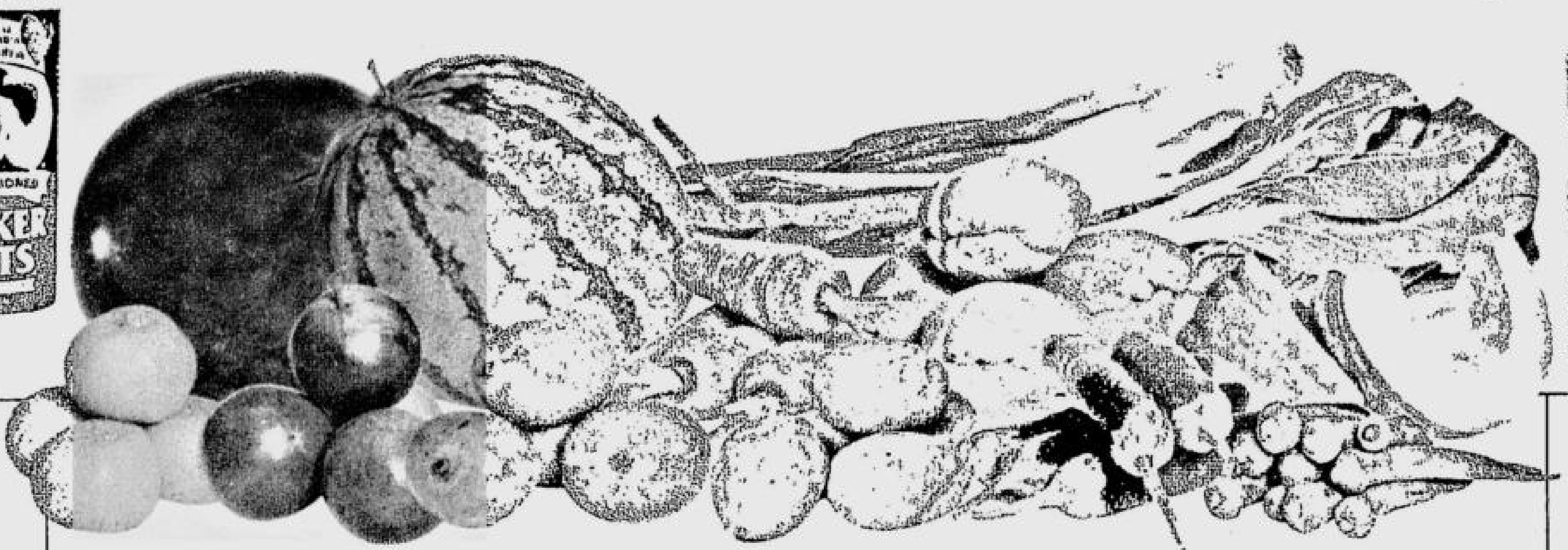
FROM APRIL 2 TO APRIL 21, 2004

19 DAYS OF GREAT SAVINGS! Prices good from Friday, April 2 thru Wednesday, April 21, 2004! (Store open on Maundy Thursday, closed on Good Friday. Business resumes on Black Saturday.)

APRIL						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					2	3
4	5	6	7	8	☒	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21			

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1588, series of 2004

Quaker
Old Fashioned Oats / Quick Cooking Oats
510g ₱80.50/can
1.2kg ₱140.50/can

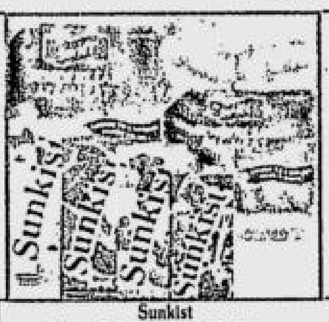


China Ponkan ₱42.00/kg • Champion Watermelon ₱18.90/kg • Star Apple ₱31.50/kg • Squash ₱7.40/kg • Sugar Baby Watermelon ₱18.90/kg • Eggplant ₱15.75/kg • Singkamas ₱13.70/kg • Indian Mango ₱15.75/kg • Okra ₱21.00/kg • Native Pechay ₱18.90/kg • Potatoes Regular ₱22.00/kg • Carrots ₱16.80/kg • Leeks ₱31.50/kg • Sayote ₱7.40/kg

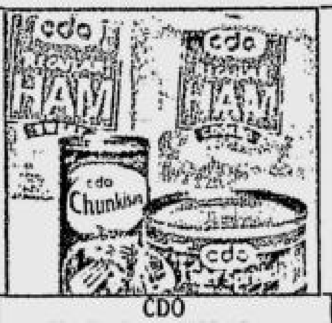
Swanson
Chicken Broth
397g ₱48.00/can

Koko Krunch
Breakfast Cereal
330g P101.85/box
500g P138.85/box

Purefoods
Chinese Luncheon Meat
350g P36.00/can
Tender Juicy Cocktail 1kg P148.30/kg

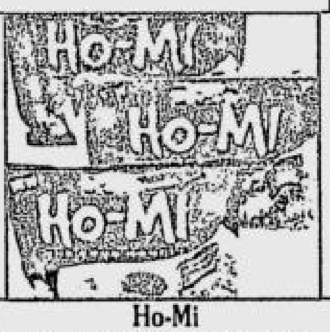


Sunkist
Mango, Dalandan 250ml P9.55/tetra
Orange, Apple, Grape, Lemonade, Tutti Fruitti 250ml P8.80/tetra
Swift Tenderlean All-Meat Regular 500g P97.60/pk Cocktail 500g P99.10/pk

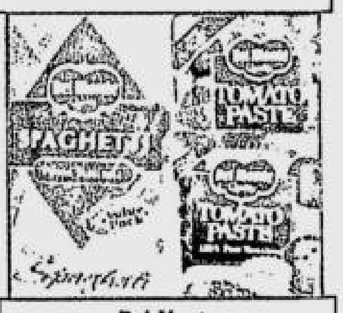


CDO
Chunkisado 175g P20.40/can
Liver Spread 85g P9.70/can
Regular Cooked Ham/Sweet Ham 250g P41.80/pk 500g P82.70/pk

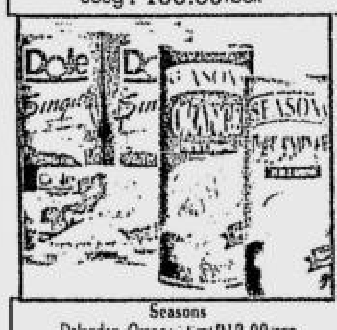
Nestle Ice Cream
Fun Toppings Choco 950ml P96.90/tub Double Dutch 950ml P101.50/tub



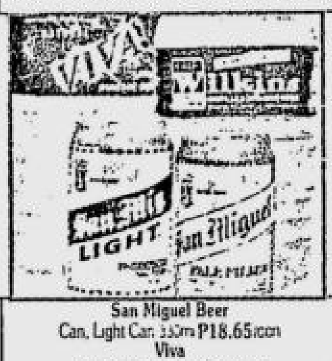
Ho-Mi
Instant Mami Noodles Beef Brisket, Chicken & Garlic, Beef Wanton 55g P4.40/pk



Del Monte
Spaghetti Pasta 2.5kg P111.35/bag Tomato Paste SUP 150g P16.65/pk 70g P8.85/pk

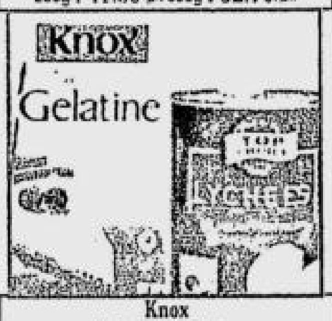


Seasons
Dalandan, Orange 240ml P12.00/can
Four Seasons Juice Drink 190ml P9.50/can
Dole
Four Seasons Juice (4pk) 240ml P53.20/pk
Seasons Mango Juice (4pk) 240ml P55.10/pk



San Miguel Beer
Can, Light Can 330ml P18.65/can
Viva
Mineral Water 5L P45.00/jug
Wilkins
Distilled Drinking Water 6L P63.00/jug

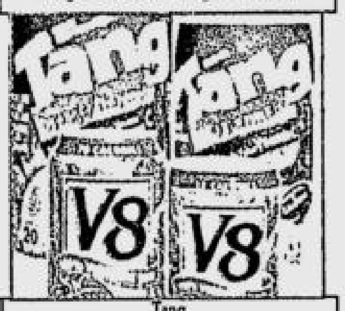
Lay's
Potato Chips Regular, Sour Cream KC Masterpieces Bbq, Salt & Vinegar 184g P80.35/pkg
Value Lines Cheetos Crunchy, Ruffles Regular Sour Cream & Onion, Lay's Regular, Bbq, Sour Cream & Onion 28g P12.75/pkg



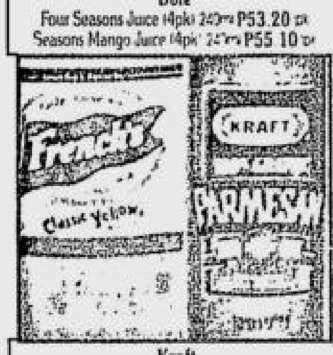
Knox
Unflavored Gelatine
28g P50.00/box 227g P375.50/box
Top Choice
Lychees 565g P32.00/can

Golden Grain
Lasagna Ex-Wide 454g P78.50/box
Federici
Fettuccine 500g P45.50/box
Fusilli 500g P33.00/box

Bertolli
Classico Olive Oil 241g P84.50/bot 482g P155.50/bot 964g P290.50/bot Extra Virgin Olive Oil 241g P100.50/bot 482g P185.50/bot 964g P350.50/bot
Carbonell
Green Olives Plain 350g P61.10/bot Pitted 350g P63.00/bot Stuffed w. Pimiento 350g P66.75/bot



Tang
Orange Juice makes 6.55L P175.50/bot makes 5.7L P125.50/bot makes 19L P320.50
Campbell's
V-8 Vegetable Juice 156g P24.50/can 326g P33.00/can



Kraft
Parmesan Cheese 65g P55.50/can
French's
Mustard Classic 680g P60.50/bot
Bold & Spicy Brown Mustard 340g P55.50/bot

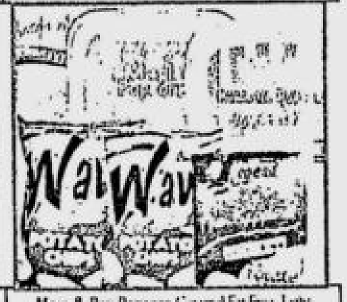
Leche Pascual Yogurt
Low Fat Peach & Passion Fruit 125g P20.70/cup
Welch's
Grape Jelly 425g P80.80/bot 907g P90.90/bot Squeeze 624g P101.00/bot

Nabisco
Premium Cracker Saltine 113g P50.50/box
Cracker Saltine, Unsalted 227g P85.50/box
Fat Free, Low Salt, Saltine Unsalted 454g P100.50/box
Nestle
Quick Chocolate 375g P58.70/can

Maxwell House
Sanka Decaf Instant 113g P170.00/bot
Yuban
Instant Coffee 227g P250.00/bot
Higgins & Burke
Assorted Flavors Tea 20's P111.75/box

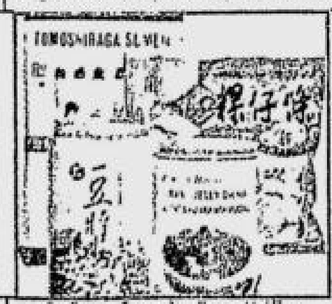
Happy Day
Grapefruit, Multivitamin 1L P61.50/tetra
Jolly Fresh
Orange, Grapefruit 2L P113.00/bot

Wei-Chuan
Water Chestnuts Whole 227g P20.50/can
Baby Corn Spears 425g P19.50/can
Golden Valley
Asparagus Spears 430g P34.10/can Straw Mushroom 425g P25.10/can Choice Whole Mushroom 400g P23.60/can
Pieces & Stem Mushroom 400g P58.20/can

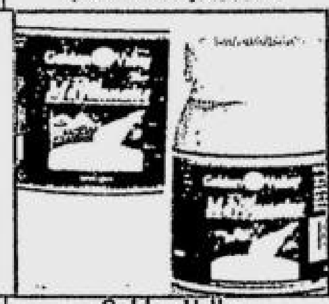


Mom & Pop Popcorn Caramel Fat Free, Light 227g P64.20/box Maple, Maple Light 227g P66.7
Legend The Rippled Potato Chips
Sour Cream & Onion, Real Bbq 75g P20.50/pk Wave Potato Chips Chili Bbq Cheddar Sour Cream 75g P19.00/pk

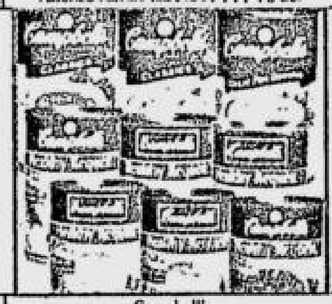
Shasta
Diet Grape, Kiwi Strawberry, Cola 340g P12.60/can
Welch's
Grape Juice Drink 326g P22.50/can



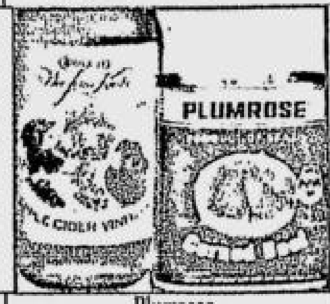
Six Fortune Taiwan Noodle Shredded Flour, Yung Chun White, Egg Noodle, Tomoshiraga 450g P47.60/box Somen White, Rice Stick Noodle 340g P53.00/pkg
Famous House Soya Bean Drink 350g P19.00/can Chrysanthemum, Green Tea 350g Guava Juice, Grass Jelly Drink 12oz P19.50



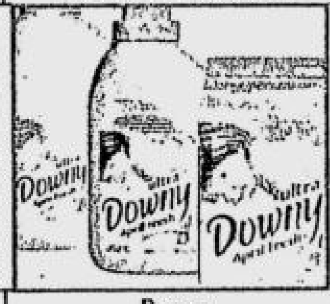
Golden Valley
Mayonnaise 220ml P28.75/bot
470ml P59.30/bot
4L P241.60/jug



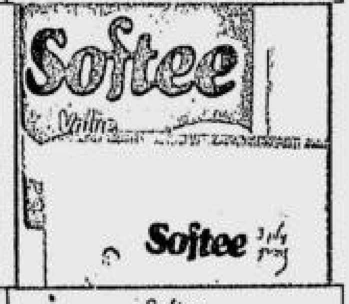
Campbell's
Tomato Classic U S A Chicken Noodle, Cream of Mushroom 737g P90.50/can
Healthy Request U S A Chicken Noodle, Chicken w. Rice, Cream of Celery Cream of Chicken, Cream of Mushroom, Minestrone 305g P57.50/can



Plumrose
Corned Beef 198g P42.80/can 340g P59.90/can
Rauch
Apple Cider Vinegar 1L P81.50/bot

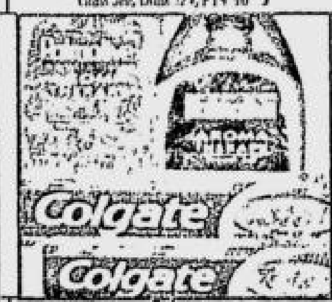


Downy
Ultra April Fresh 600L P143.90/jug 1.8L P373.50/jug 1.92L P190.90/jug
Refill 1.2L P262.60/jug

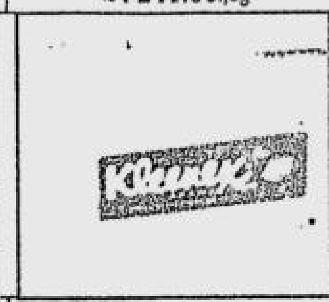


Softee
Value 2Ply Bathroom Tissue 12pk P85.70/bag 9pk P67.85/bag
Facial Economy Fancy 3ply P40.50/box

Joy Dishwashing Liquid Lemon 190ml P17.65/pc
Pantene Hairfall Control 200ml P82.85/bot
Rejoice Reviving Shampoo 200ml P68.90/con.
Head & Shoulder Naturally Clean 200ml P81.90/bot



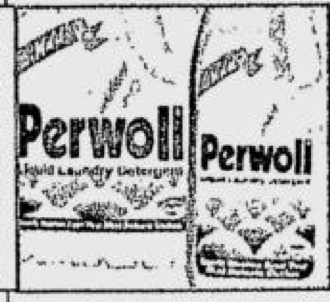
Colgate
Total Plus Whitening 160g P60.10/tube 90g P34.75/tube
Palmolive
Aroma Therapy Showergel, [illegible]



Kleenex
White Unscented Facial Tissue
220-2ply P73.20/box

Pledge
w/ Orange Oil 425ml P142.30/pc
Clean & Dust 354ml P155.30/pc
Orange, Rainshower, Lemon 400ml P155.30/pc
Lemon, Rainshower 300ml P129.35/pc
Glo
[illegible] P72.25

Surf
Dishwashing Liquid Lemon
50ml P4.20/can
190ml P16.10/can



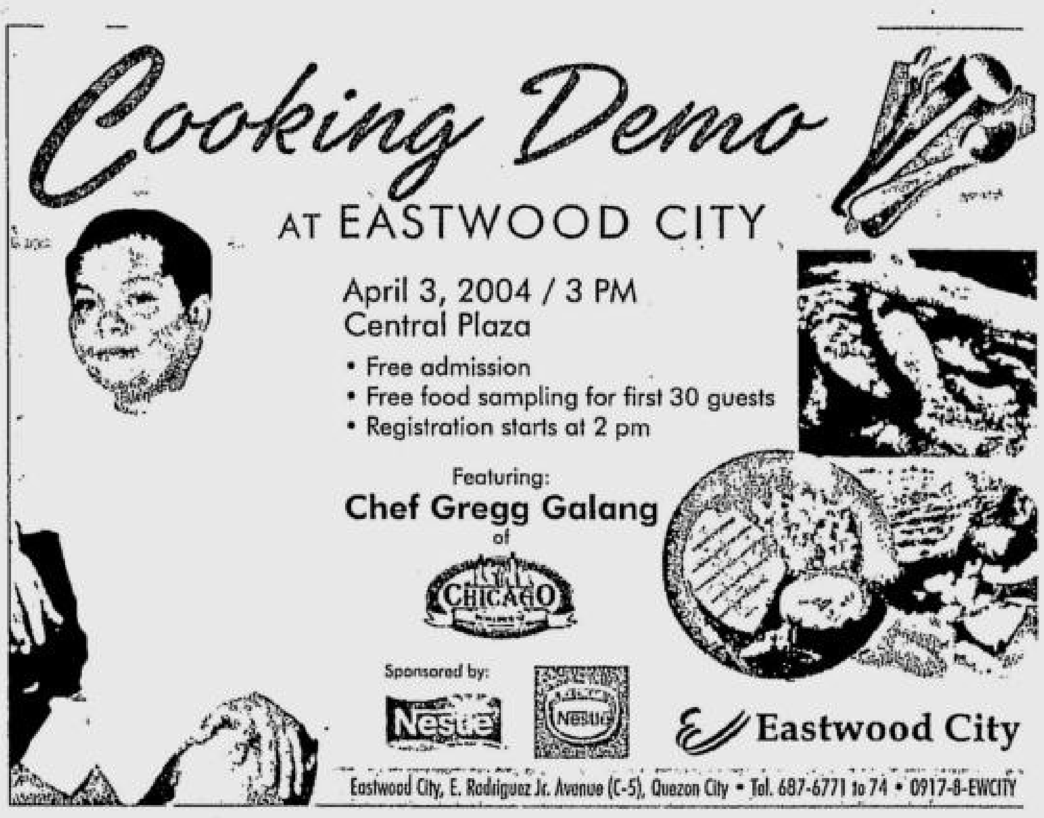
Perwoll
Liquid Laundry Detergent
4L P280.00/jug 2L P170.00/jug

Sanicare
Bathroom Tissue 600's/9px P109.70/bag 400's 12px P111.40/bag
Cheers
Table Napkin 350's P83.00/bag
Partymaps 50's P18.00/pk

LIFESTYLE

For feedback, text us at (0918) 382-4061 or (0916) 200-1160
or e-mail us at pr_lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO



Cooking Demo
AT EASTWOOD CITY
April 3, 2004 / 3 PM
Central Plaza
• Free admission
• Free food sampling for first 30 guests
• Registration starts at 2 pm
Featuring:
Chef Gregg Galang
of
CHICAGO
Sponsored by:
Nestle
Nestle
Eastwood City
Eastwood City, E. Rodriguez Jr. Avenue (C-5), Quezon City • Tel. 687-6771 to 74 • 0917-8-EWCITY

Practical packing tips

IT'S that time of the year again when almost everyone is gearing up for that much-planned, long-awaited vacation—be it a three-day trip to the beach or some nearby Asian country, or a month-long sojourn across Europe or the Americas. No matter the destination or the length of the trip, the challenge of packing arises.

APPLES' PICKINGS

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

The ultimate goal is to be prepared for multiple situations or even fashion whims but still manage to carry and fit everything in your luggage with some space to spare for additional purchases. It may seem like a Herculean task at the outset but with careful planning and a few practical tips, you can actually travel light and still look your fashionable best at all times.

Research

Start off by doing some research about your destination and the activities you will be engaging in. There are Internet travel sites or various guidebooks that can provide information on local customs and other significant information that can help you decide what to bring. For instance, if you're preparing for a safari in Botswana, you can only wear nondescript colors like black or khaki so you have to pack accordingly.

Next, check the weather so you can prepare for any eventuality. You might want to pack a foldable umbrella or a raincoat if you're headed for unpredictably rainy London. A heavy sweater or two lighter ones that you can layer may be necessary if you're going to cold places like Whistler in Canada. It will also help to check with your hotel to see if they provide toiletries, a hairdryer or iron so you don't have to bring any of those.

List, edit and combine

After gathering information about your destination, make a daily list of all your planned activities (e.g. shopping, swimming, dinner and dancing, the theater, etc.) and what you would like to wear for each occasion. This is one way of making sure you have something for every possible event and that you don't leave anything essential. Plus, having a list can help you edit your choices, minimize the number of clothing you will bring and in the process, create the most number of combinations.

Lay everything down to create ensembles and to make sure you have everything you require. Basically, all the separates you bring should combine well. Also, make certain that you don't bring unnecessary or redundant items like two camel sweaters or two pairs of black trousers.

The key to editing your choices is to limit yourself to one basic color such as black or camel, although as a general rule dark colors look better when worn over again as compared to light-colored clothing. This way you can easily mix and match and get more wear out of each item you decide to bring.

Colorize

Having determined your base color and basic wardrobe, add a bit of panache and personality by injecting some bright colors. You can do this through the use of scarves, thin knits and T-shirts. It's important to note that knit pieces are better for travel than woven items because they are wrinkle-resistant and crushable and easy to pack, roll and stuff.

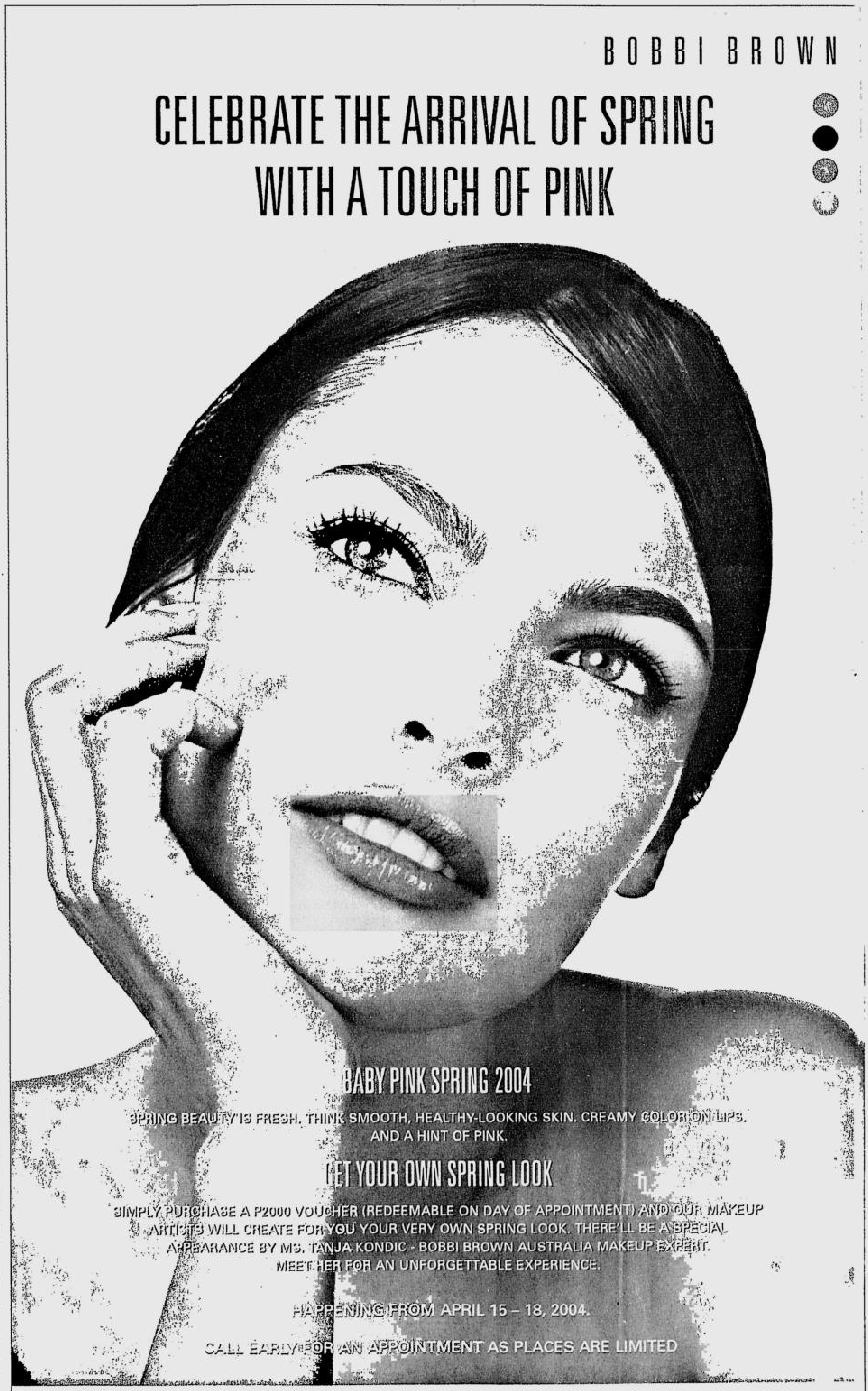
A vibrant travel tote that goes with all your pieces is also a wonderful way to brighten up

PRACTICAL/ 13

onstage 2nyt

Cowboy	Cowboy	Cowboy
LAS PIÑAS ☎801.7644	FAT 16 CRO MAGNON	OPEN FROM 6PM TO 5AM NO ENTRANCE FEE
MABINI ☎525.1474	POWER SURGE PHRYGIAN/ZEST	OPEN FROM 6PM TO 5AM NO ENTRANCE FEE
MALATE ☎521.8143	MUSIC CIRCUIT MEN OPPOSE	OPEN FROM 6PM TO 5AM NO ENTRANCE FEE
NOVALICHES ☎936.9757	BEAT BOX HEADWORKS	OPEN FROM 6PM TO 5AM NO ENTRANCE FEE
BIÑAN ☎(049)511.7268	EMMANUELLE KOOLJACKS	OPEN FROM 6PM TO 5AM NO ENTRANCE FEE
TIA MARIA'S REMEDIOS ☎522.0429	TIA MARIA'S VERSE 2 1ST SIGHT	TIA MARIA'S NO ENTRANCE FEE

APRIL 02 FRIDAY



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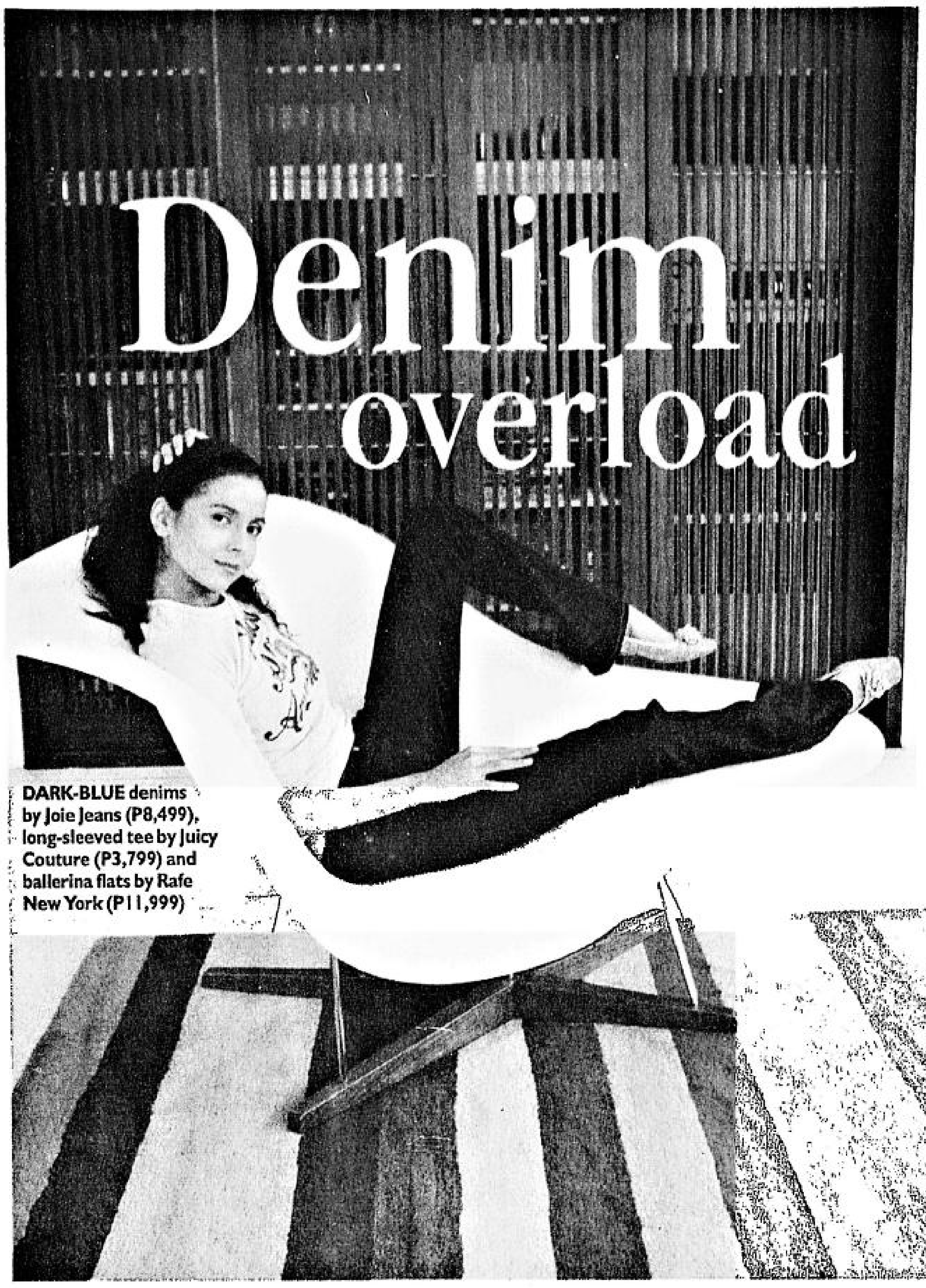
Denim overload


DARK-BLUE denims by Joie Jeans (P8,499), long-sleeved tee by Juicy Couture (P3,799) and ballerina flats by Rafe New York (P11,999)

Even as jeans have spawned a slew of designer labels, slipping into a pricey pair doesn't make one an instant supermodel

BOOT-CUT jeans with front-leg crease by Juicy Couture (P11,249), red silk top by Trina Turk (P8,649) and lime-green satin shoes by YSL (stylist's own)

DESIGNER LABELS SUCH AS 7 FOR ALL MANKIND, CITIZENS FOR HUMANITY, JOE'S JEANS, JOIE JEANS, PAPER DENIM & CLOTH, HABITUAL AND JUICY COUTURE ARE AVAILABLE AT MIX JEANS BAR IN GREENBELT 3 AND ROBINSONS GALLERIA

STYLING:
TINA MARISTELA-OCAMPO
HAIR AND MAKEUP
ERIC MANINGAT (0919-3434808)
MODEL:
CATERINA JUAN (CAL CARRIE'S)

BLACK jeans with piping by Joe's Jeans (P3,999), one-shoulder top by Max Studio (P8,999), suede sash by Rafe New York (P9,649) and Manolo Blahnik lace-up stilettos (stylist's own)

Text by Cheche V. Moral
Photos by Chito Vecina

AT WHAT point in the denim-shopping process does your "jean-ius" step in?

Is it in knowing the hottest and gotta-have-'em-or-I'd-go-naked designer labels? Is it in knowing the glam brands that outfit Cameron, Gwyneth or Sarah Jessica's famous booties?

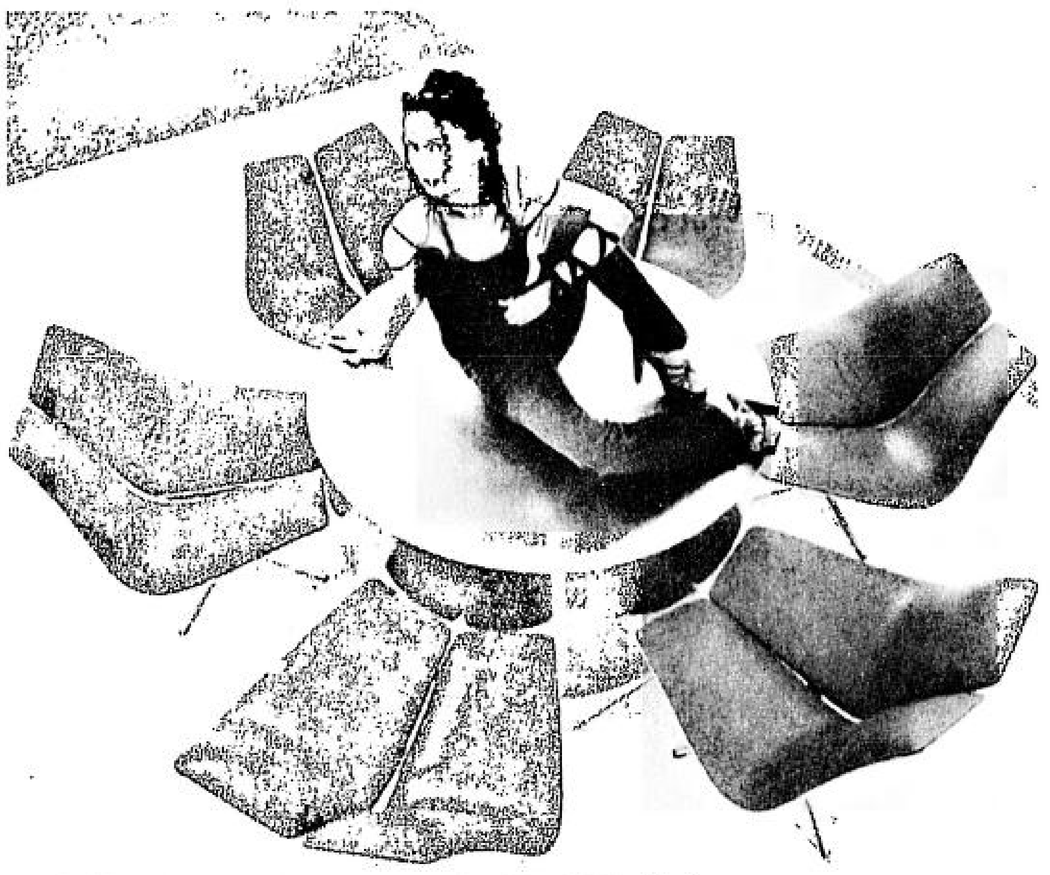
Or is it in accepting that not all—yourself included—are blessed with near-perfect bods as the above-mentioned Hollywood stars, and therefore may not look like a million dollars in every pair of jeans you don?

Even as the humble denim has reached cult-like status and spawned a slew of designer labels, it's important to note that slipping into the priciest pair does not make a supermodel.

When the goal is to find oneself in the league of the glamorous jean-clad fray, the ability to recognize brands only by looking at the signature back-pocket designs just doesn't cut it. Jean shopping is still pretty much a personal affair—style- and body-type-wise.

Funky

Joe's Jeans, for example, a funky brand known for its daring and cutting-edge details, may not be to the liking of those who prefer safer styles.


DARK-WASH jeans with front-leg crease by 7 For All Mankind (P7,900), red tank by Joie Jeans (P3,749), black corset by Mex Studio (P11,399) and Michael Kors platform sandals (P9,049)

JUICY Couture capri pants with flared hem (P9,999), white long-sleeved shirt by T (P3,099) and Prada platform lace-ups (stylist's own)

Fans of 7 For All Mankind (or simply 7) swear by its molded-into-your-body fit. It best suits women with reed-thin limbs, but is equally favored for its butt-flattering fit and precariously low-low-hip cuts.

The same women who like 7 also go for Citizens of Humanity, which has a similar look and fit. And this is no accident: After a dispute—and eventual parting of ways—among the owners of 7, the latter brand was born.

MIX Jeans Bar and former model Tina Maristela-Ocampo prefers Paper Denim & Cloth, which she says has roomier hips. She adds that those who got hooked on the phenomenal tracksuit fever started by Juicy Couture will go delirious as the brand comes out with its own denim styles.

But note also that yielding to the hype of a trend isn't always smart. The tapered '80s cut, for example, is making a comeback, but this isn't always flattering. Curvaceous and fuller-sized women should steer clear of this style. Bootlegs are generally more flattering, as the flared hem balances the hip.

Dark washes on the outer thigh help to disguise less-than-fit gams. There are also styles that place the "knee" a couple of inches higher to create the illusion of length. Back pockets—or the absence of them—are strategically placed to either highlight or hide.

Whatever the washes, cuts or trends, finding the pair you love and will love your body back may require some work.

But when you find the brand that works for you, who else is wearing it wouldn't matter as much. Knowing you look and feel fabulous in it does.

Now that's "jean-ius."

E-mail the author at cmoral@inquirer.com.ph

BEIGE jeans by 7 For All Mankind (P8,500), orange terry hoodie by Juicy Couture (P5,599); aqua tank by Puma (P1,295), aqua satin heels (stylist's own)

Lenten exhibit in Rizal

"DEBOSYON at Kasaysayan," a Lenten exhibit of 37 holy images that reenacts the passion of Christ, is ongoing until April 4 at the Diocesan Shrine of Nuestra Señora de Aranzazu, San Mateo, Rizal. Admission is free.

GOINGS ON

ART COURSE. Solano Cruz will teach the basics of drawing and other advanced courses at Deovir, 5/F SM City Manila, Arroceros corner San Marcelino Street, every Thursday and Saturday. Other artists, Rolly Rosal and June Atienza, will also hold workshops every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday. Call 5223671.

PRESENTATION. Cater Club will host a lunch buffet presentation for soon-to-be-wed couples on April 4, 11 a.m., at the Phoenix Hall, Gazebo Royale, Visayas Avenue, QC. Call 7238220, 7251419, 7210794, (0919) 2840496.

HOMECOMING. Saint Louis University Alumni Foundation Inc. will hold a Grand Alumni Homecoming on May 1, 8 a.m., at the SLU Quadrangle. Gawad "Luis" Awards will be conferred on successful SLU alumni who have shown exemplary leadership in their respective professions and/or have achieved national/international prominence. Submit nominations (with biodata and 2"x2" photo) on or before April 5. Call (074) 4448264 to 48; 5321446/1451/1474. E-mail fkg@pworld.net.

REVIEW PROGRAM. Top United States employers and staffing agencies and top Philippine recruiters are now sending nurse recruits to Assessment Technologies Institute International for review for the July 14 Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools exam. The review program starts on April 12. Call 6830312 to 16.

FILMMAKING. Mowelfund Film Institute will hold Summer Filmmaking Workshops starting April 14. Lectures will be held at Mowelfund Plaza. Call 7271915.

WORKSHOPS. Care Center for Early Learning offers summer workshops for children aged 2-12. Classes begin on April 19. Call 9284847, 4165476 or (0916) 6171976.

PROGRAMS. Sr. Dolores Mitch, journal consultant, will give Intensive Journal Programs starting April 19 in Baguio City. Call 4424926.

SALE. Sta. Lucia East Department Store is holding a denim and tee festival, "Cool Mix," until April 30. Avail of up to 50-percent discount on select denim and T-shirt brands. See a wide selection of denim shorts, skirts, pants and matching cotton tops in a fashion exhibit. Every P300 purchase at Sta. Lucia East Department Store and affiliate stores, Home Gallery and Planet Toys, gives you a chance to win a Boracay trip plus pocket money.

RENE Robles (6th from left) is currently holding the exhibit "Transcendence" until today at Pacific Star Bldg., Makati Ave. He is shown with lawyer Gloria Calvario of the Commission on Audit, Dolly da Costa of Century Properties, lawyer Gladys Vilchez, lawyers Louie Calvario, Ian Umali and Grace Bangaoil and Konn Salao.

PHOTO TILT. Show off your photography skills and win prizes by catching the action at Nestea Beach Volley 2004 finals in Boracay. Participants must accomplish an entry form to be submitted with their entries on or before April 30. Entries must be submitted to Fuentes Publicity Network Inc., 602 Seddco Building, Thailand corner Legazpi Street, Legazpi Village, Makati. For more information call 8939355 or 8163109.

COMPETITION. The Federation of Philippine Photographers Foundation and the government of Puerto Princesa have launched an on-the-spot photo contest with the city as subject. Entries must be submitted on or before April 30. Call 8435341 or 8137420.

LANGUAGE COURSES. The Nihongo Center Foundation is now accepting applications for summer classes to be held at its Sampaloc and Makati campuses. Call 7353179/ 8924916 to 19.

Practical packing tips

From page I1

your wardrobe. And jewelry is always one way of creating different looks, but don't bring anything that's too valuable to lose.

Choose your shoes wisely

Choosing what shoes to bring can be very tricky, as you must do your best to limit them to only, or around, three pairs, because shoes are heavy, bulky and take up too much room in your luggage.

But how do you go about editing your footwear? Start off by picking a pair of comfortable walking shoes for touring and shopping. Then, pack a dressier pair for evenings out.

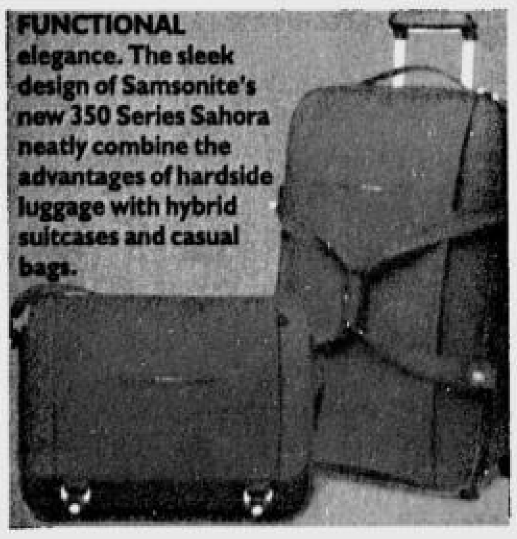
Make sure you choose shoes that you can match with majority of your travel wardrobe. And as much as possible, don't pack an outfit that requires a different pair of shoes, unless you are attending a special occasion like a wedding or other such formal events.

Do a dry run

It's wise to try on everything you're planning to bring so you'll know for sure that everything looks as good as you think it will. It's also one way to determine if any of the items need repairs. Make sure you check for hanging hems, stains or missing buttons and the like.

Always remember that you should pack things based on your style, destination and the activities you will be doing. And to make sure you have a great time, bring your favorite, most comfortable clothes. This way, you won't mind having less and still feel confident and stylish at all times.

E-mail the author at apsadvice@hotmail.com



FUNCTIONAL elegance. The sleek design of Samsonite's new 350 Series Sahora neatly combine the advantages of hardside luggage with hybrid suitcases and casual bags.

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Still concerned about the health of your potted plants? Instead of soil, fill your pots with **PLANTASTIC** Soil-less Potting Mix. This garden-tested blend of natural ingredients is proven to eliminate the common problems caused by soil in pots. Now you can relax & help your potted plants look and feel fantastic – with **PLANTASTIC!**

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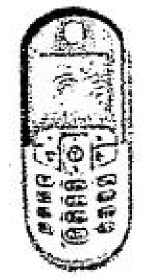

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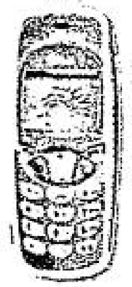

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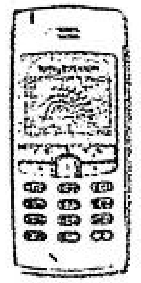

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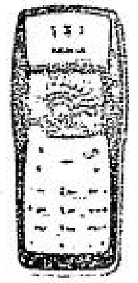

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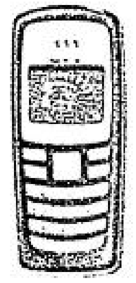

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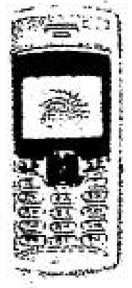

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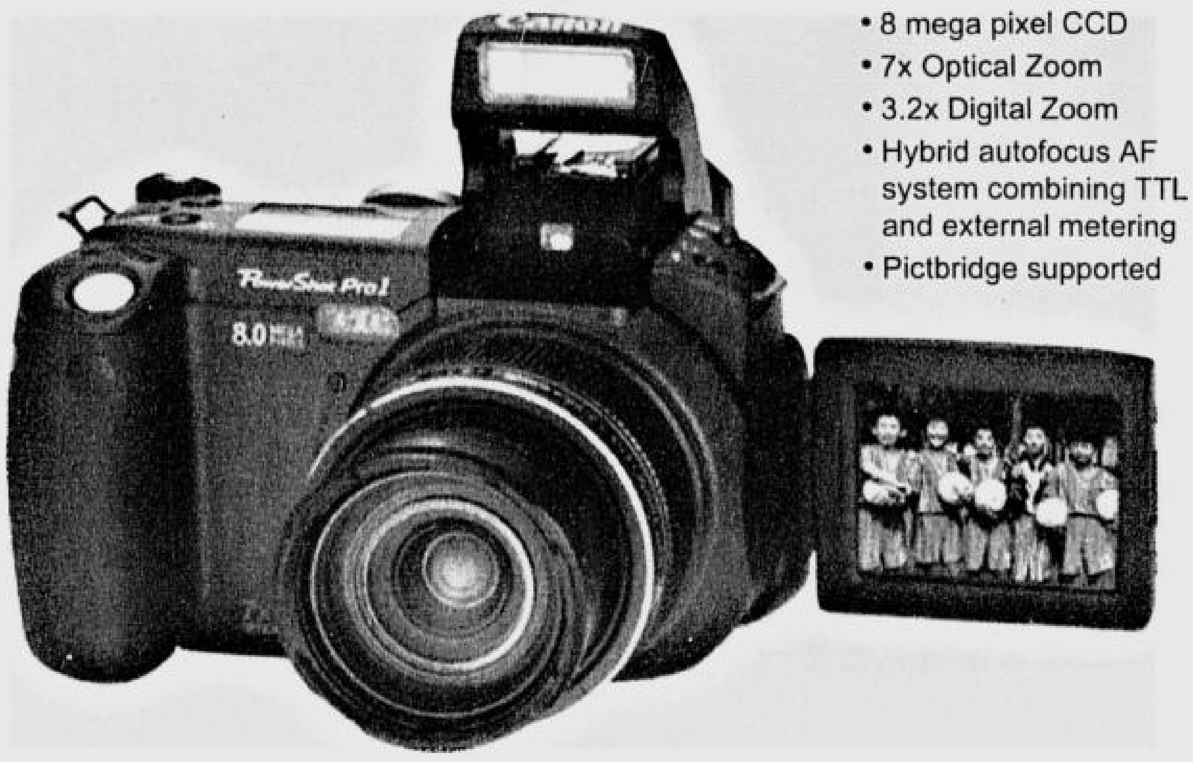
Canon

2004 CANON IMAGING AND INFORMATION PRODUCTS REFLECT CANON'S CONTINUING COMMITMENT TO INNOVATION

Canon's New Flagship PowerShot Pro1 Delivers Best in Picture Quality and Functionality



Powershot Pro1

- 8 mega pixel CCD
- 7x Optical Zoom
- 3.2x Digital Zoom
- Hybrid autofocus AF system combining TTL and external metering
- Pictbridge supported

Canon Marketing Philippines today announced the introduction of its top-of-the-range PowerShot Pro1, boasting the latest innovations and highest technology making it perfect for the pursuit of the ultimate in image quality and beauty.

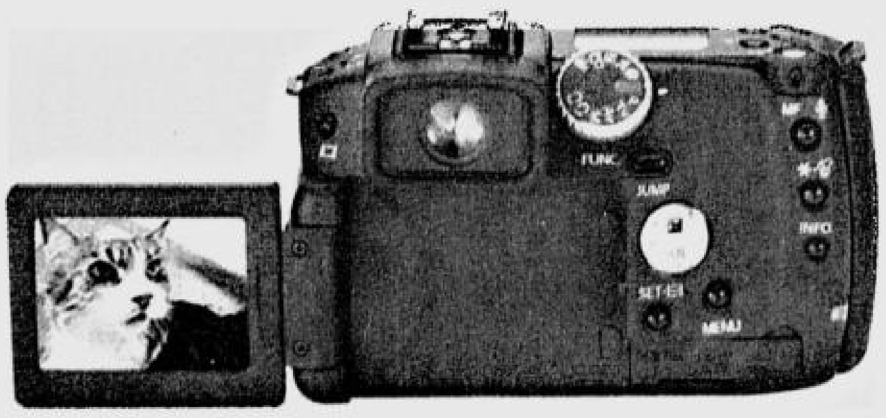
Developed as the flagship model of the PowerShot series, Canon's PowerShot Pro1 is positioned as the leading camera in the 'advanced amateur' market category. The PowerShot Pro1 features a professional-quality large-diameter 7x optical zoom lens that incorporates fluorite and UD lens elements, Canon's first in a digital compact camera, producing excellent picture quality and reducing lens aberration to the absolute minimum.

At the same time, a newly developed 8-megapixel, high-image-quality CCD has been incorporated to establish the image of Canon as a leader in optics and image quality. All this is packaged in an elegant black body creating an exclusive image consistent with that of a flagship model.

High Image Quality

The newly developed 8-megapixel CCD offers the highest resolution in its class for still images, enhanced further by a high-resolution, retractable 7x optical zoom lens with a 28 to 200mm focal length (as 35mm film equivalent), the lens itself boasting advanced technology features such as fluorite and UD lens making it comparable with the Canon 'L' Series of professional lenses found in their EOS SLR or EF interchangeable lens line. Used for the first time in a digital compact camera, this lens offers the brightness at the f/2.4 setting at the wide-angle end of the zoom range, making it ideal for photography in low-light as well as all other conditions.

Coupled with Canon's proprietary DIGIC digital imaging processor, the camera delivers outstanding image resolution and colour fidelity, fast and accurate AF and AE operations, low noise and extended battery life. The maximum recording pixels for a still image is 3264 x 2448, ensuring sufficient resolution for printing high-quality images in the large A3 format.



Advanced Features

The PowerShot Pro1 incorporates a wealth of features designed to make it easy to shoot and record memorable shots. On the software side, with the introduction of Adobe RGB as standard, the PowerShot Pro1 now offers a choice of RGB and sRGB colour spaces for shooting. The camera also offers a total of 16 image quality modes (recording pixels (5) x compression (3) + RAW), and three types of recording pixels for movie mode (high-resolution VGA/QVGA/QQVGA).

The Hybrid AF system combines the traditional TTL contrast-detection focusing with external triangulation focusing to assure excellent results and shorter autofocusing times over almost the entire range of shooting conditions.

The PowerShot Pro1 also offers shutter speeds in the 15 to 1/4000 sec. range for capturing extremely fast-moving subjects, plus continuous-shooting mode with a choice of high-speed (2.5 images/sec.) and standard (1.0 images/sec.) shooting. For extra flexibility, a super-macro function enables the camera to zoom in for close-ups as near as 3 cm from the subject.

The PowerShot Pro1 is also equipped with a safety-shift function for optimum exposure control in the Shutter-speed Priority or Aperture Priority modes, as well as with a retractable pop-up flash as found on EOS models.

Enhanced Ease of Operation

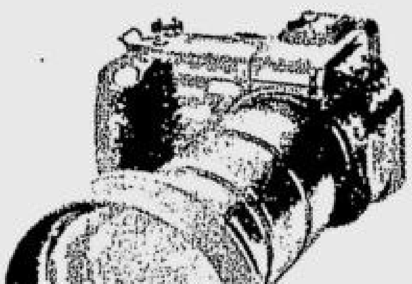
While the PowerShot Pro1 provides a lens-barrel zoom-ring for manual zooming, the same USM (ultrasonic motor) as used on EOS lenses functions as the drive motor for high-speed zooming.

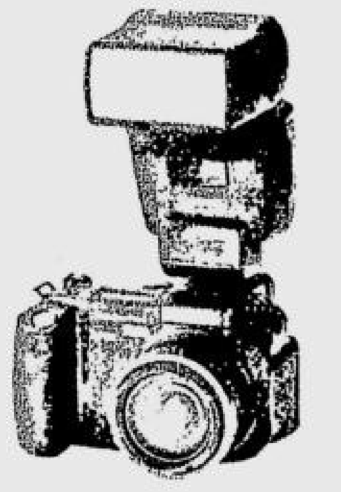
An electronic viewfinder employing a 0.44-inch, 235,000-pixel LCD-panel, the best in its class, offers very high-resolution image display.

For optimum image display, the panel used for the vari-angle LCD monitor is a 2.0-inch, 235,000-pixel, low-temperature polysilicon TFT LCD, the highest in its class. Moreover, the PowerShot Pro1 has been improved to provide a menu setting that disables mirror (reversed display) imaging on the LCD monitor.

For the first time in the compact range of Canon digital cameras, the PowerShot Pro1 data display panel is now backlit to facilitate reading in low-light situations. As with current models, a 2x to 10x expanded zoom playback capability is available during image review. To enhance user mobility, the shooting lens simultaneously retracts when power is switched off after shooting.

To allow shooting in locations where silence is required, a mute mode disables all sounds except the warning sound. And to save energy, a Display Off mode switches off the LCD monitor and the electronic viewfinder after a user-selectable period of time.





For extra convenience, the camera not only allows direct printing to Canon's direct photo printers, but is also compliant with PictBridge, allowing direct printing to any PictBridge-enabled printer.

System Accessories

The PowerShot Pro1 is compatible with EOS series Speedlite for external flash and a full range of new optional accessories is available to extend its functionality to professionals.

TC-DC58A: Tele-converter enabling shooting of subjects at focal distances of approximately 300mm (35mm film equivalent)
LA-DC58C: Conversion lens adapter for attaching the tele-converter, macro ring light and macro twin light
FA-DC58A: Filter adapter for attaching filters
LH-DC10*: Flare-preventing lens hood is provided as standard feature
BP-511A*: An improved battery from BP-511 increases approx. 26% capacity
FC-512MH: A high speed writable CF card. And FC-32MH, FC-64MH*, FC-256MH, FC-512MH are capable of recording VGA-sized movie clips

A SPECIAL CANON OFFER

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Cut and fax this coupon to **Canon Marketing Philippines** at 810-9797 to get a free pack of Canon Genuine Ink and Paper for your CP-10 printer!

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Canon

2004 CANON IMAGING AND INFORMATION PRODUCTS REFLECT CANON'S CONTINUING COMMITMENT TO INNOVATION

MORE FEATURES MEAN GREATER VALUE! THE NEW CANON COMPACT DV CAMCORDERS

Canon Marketing Philippines is delighted to announce new additions to their growing line of high-quality Digital Video camcorders for 2004, the ultra-compact ZR 80 series with 800,000 pixels CCD and proven, powerful Canon optical zoom lenses for top performance. It is also powered by DIGIC DV digital imaging processor for excellent picture quality.

Major design enhancements have been incorporated into the new ZR 80 series for a slim and compact look with a new character and colour. The lens body is highlighted by clearly differentiating it from the main body by the use of a shoulder line in the design. Combined with a two-tone colour scheme, the body appears much slimmer, lower and more compact, accentuating the actual reductions in dimensions from previous models.

Like the very successful ZR 60 series, these new DV models feature a stylish outlook design and appeal to a wide audience, including vacationers, young filmmakers and even traveling businessmen. A significant advantage is extended recording time when shooting Motion JPEG clips for storage on SD Memory Card or MultiMediaCard. And a new Skin Detail mode softens details to reduce the appearance of skin imperfections for a more complimentary appearance.

People new to video movie making and people stepping up to digital from analog camcorders will appreciate their advanced features and great value for money. They are sure to be Canon's best-selling camcorders.

Canon Introduces New Megapixel Photo DV Elura 60 and Elura 70

Canon Marketing Philippines today announced the introduction of its new Elura 60 and 70 Photo DV featuring a high-magnification zoom lens and megapixel capability for superb movies and stills and designed to consolidate Canon's lead in the compact digital video camcorder category and mid-range market.

Targeted at families, the replacement market, users preferring portability and attractive design, and at frequent travellers, the Elura 60/70 delivers high-quality movie and still images from a high-magnification 18x/14x optical zoom lens coupled with a 1.33 megapixel, 1/4.5-inch CCD. Canon's proprietary DIGIC DV ultra-fast digital imaging processor, and high-resolution 16:9 mode. Full digital camera functions also include Print/Share button, Auto Exposure Bracketing and Continuous Shooting.

High Image Quality

On the Elura 60/70, Canon's unique DIGIC DV digital imaging processor uses separate optimization processes so that both movies and still images are sharp and clear. The Elura 60/70 also offers two high-resolution 16:9 modes: one mode works with image stabilization (approx. 790,000 pixels), and the other mode operates without image stabilization (approx. 920,000 pixels) but provides higher resolution.

In the Elura 70, Canon's expertise in advanced optical technology has been utilized to develop a compact, megapixel camcorder with 18x high-magnification optical zoom capability. To provide additional sharp imaging performance, a double-sided aspherical lens is utilized featuring a Super Spectra Coating for excellent sharpness and contrast. With Auto mode, minimum shutter speed can be reduced for low-brightness shooting to enable a wider shooting range under challenging conditions.

Full Digital Function

This is the first Canon digital video camcorder to include a Print/Share Button. Direct printing and file transfer (Windows only) can be effected easily by simply connecting to printer or PC and pressing the button.

With the Continuous Shooting function, options for 5 frames/second and 3 frames/second are available for SXGA size. High-speed continuous shooting is also possible. In order to simplify the settings for Continuous Shooting mode, separate buttons are used for Continuous Shooting, Auto Exposure Bracketing, and Single Shot.

Also available is an Auto Exposure Bracketing function. The exposure is automatically divided into three levels for shooting. With Simultaneous Photo Recording, when recording to tape, still images can also be simultaneously recorded to the memory card (in VGA only).

With the Selecting AF Frame function, choose from one of the three focusing frames to automatically put the subject you want into sharp focus. With Progressive Photo mode, a mechanical shutter utilized in tandem with an interlace scan CCD produces still images with very little blurring. (High-speed recording at 30 frames per second possible with a progressive scan CCD is not available.)

[illegible]

On the Elura 70 only, in Super Night Mode, the Super Night LED on the camera front turns on automatically according to the darkness and the shutter speed adjusts automatically, enabling shooting in colour even in pitch-dark locations. And with the new Night+ Mode, the user can activate the LED at any time regardless of available light, while the shutter speed adjusts automatically for greater ease of operation in low-light conditions.

Skin Detail Mode

In this mode, the appearance of roughness in a subject's face is reduced by detecting the hue of the skin tones of the subject and by setting the compensation amount for the aperture gain in the portions concerned on the low side. One of the objectives of this mode is to deal with the adverse effect of blurred outlines of the skin tone areas when the aperture gain of those areas has been lowered. Operation is as easy as switching this function on or off as needed.

Motion JPEG Recording

With the 320 x 240/160 x 120 Motion JPEG format, card video at 12.5 frames/second can be shot for extended periods. Copies can be made from the DV tape to the card enabling you to pick your favourite scenes recorded on the tape and attach them to an e-mail as a 'video card'.

Direct Print Compatibility

Direct print is easy and convenient with a dedicated USB cable through Canon Card Photo Printers and Bubble Jet Direct Photo Printers or any printers compliant with the new PictBridge industry standard.

Full Connectivity

The Elura 60/70 features DV Messenger 2.0, a peer-to-peer type communications software using the DVC for person-to-person tele-conferencing. It allows bi-directional transmission of audio-visual content and even playback of video recordings via the Internet. DV Messenger also allows control of a Canon DVC from a remote PC (camera zoom and focus, VCR playback and stop, and access to the memory card). Furthermore, by using the web camera function, it enables you to monitor your home from a remote location.

With the DV terminal, high-quality digital dubbing can be carried without harming the image resolution. You can also connect to a PC's IEEE1394 port so that you can enjoy nonlinear editing and retouching, with easy high-speed file transfer of still images and video files in the memory card via the dedicated USB Terminal.

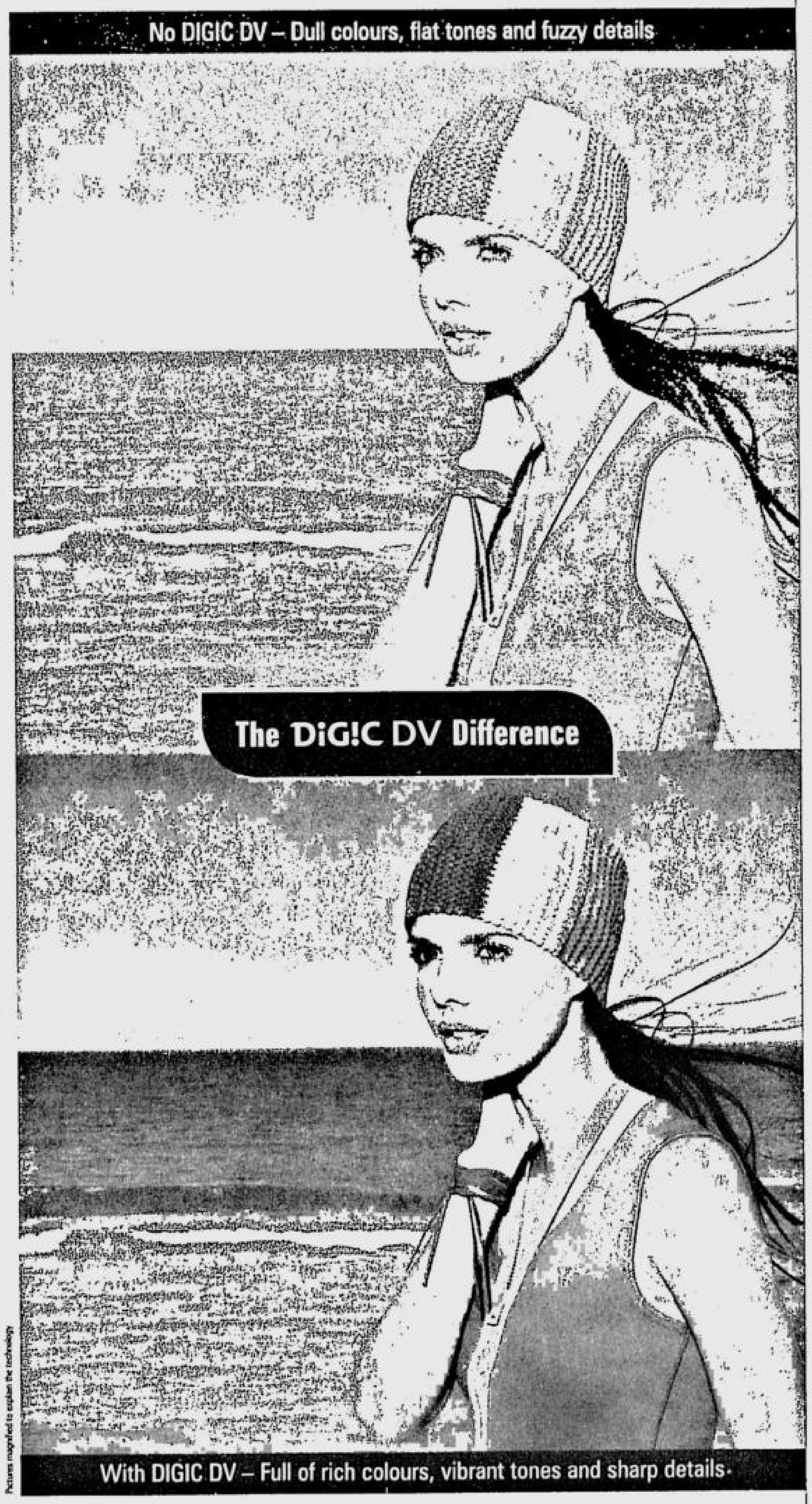
Added Versatility with Optional Accessories

Canon provides a range of optional accessories for the Elura 60/70, including wide-angle and telephoto converter lenses, filter set, video light, car battery charger and a choice of new battery packs.

Canon

Whether shooting videos or photos, you can always enjoy the best of both worlds.

Precisely why we gave DIGIC DV two brains.


No DIGIC DV – Dull colours, flat tones and fuzzy details
The DiG!C DV Difference
With DIGIC DV – Full of rich colours, vibrant tones and sharp details.

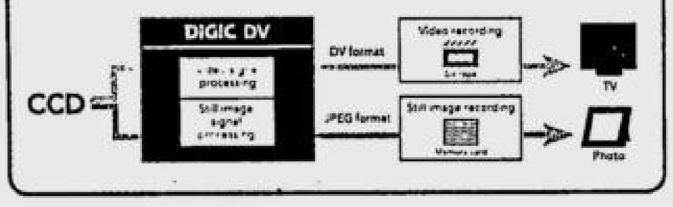
Pictures magnified to explain the technology

ZR 90/85/80

- 800,000 pixel CCD
- 22x/20x/18x optical zoom
- 440x/400x/360x digital zoom
- Electronic Image Stabiliser System
- Skin Detail Mode
- Night Plus Mode (ZR 90 only)
- 0.6x wide attachment (ZR 90 only)
- DV Messenger 2
- Direct Print function with PictBridge compatibility (ZR 85/90)

DiG!C DV Advanced Dual Image Processing

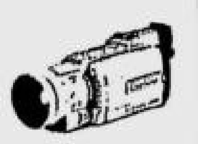
Since videos and photos have different colour requirements, DIGIC DV utilises two different colour techniques to maximise video quality for television and still image quality for print or computer display. Other manufacturers generally process image signals identically, resulting in lower quality videos and stills.



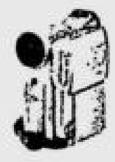
At the heart of the ZR 80 series lies Canon's unique DIGIC DV processor. It features dual brains to deliver outstanding digital video as well as stills. Rather than simply record what the lens "sees", DIGIC DV helps recreate colours, tones and details that are far more pleasing and realistic to the human eye. Among all digital camcorders, the ZR 80 series boasts superior optics with the longest optical zoom capabilities ranging from 18x to 22x. In order to produce a smoother skin appearance, the Skin Detail Mode softens details automatically during close-ups of people. What's more, in the Night Mode, the camcorder selects the ideal shutter speed and sensitivity combination to brighten up the scene, without sacrificing colour. You could say, Canon's DIGIC DV is the brains behind the image.

DiG!C DV

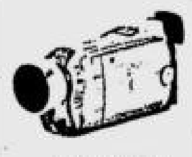
- High-performance resizing
- High-precision processing
- Video and still image optimisation
- Fast continuous shooting
- Digital effects and fades



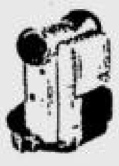
Optura Xi
- 2.2 megapixel CCD
- 10x optical zoom
- 200x digital zoom
- Optical Image Stabiliser System
- Direct Print function
- PictBridge compatibility
- P88,000



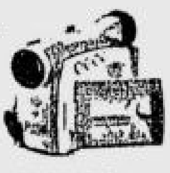
Optura 300
- 2.2 megapixel CCD
- 10x optical zoom
- 200x digital zoom
- Electronic Image Stabiliser System
- Direct Print function
- PictBridge compatibility
- P81,000



Optura 20/10
- 1.33 megapixel CCD
- 16x optical zoom
- 320x digital zoom
- Electronic Image Stabiliser System
- Direct Print function
- P55,000 / P59,000



Elura 50
- 800,000 pixel CCD
- 10x optical zoom
- 400x digital zoom
- Electronic Image Stabiliser System
- Direct Print function
- PictBridge compatibility
- P52,500



ZR 90/85/80
- 800,000 pixel CCD
- 22x/20x/18x optical zoom
- 440x/400x/360x digital zoom
- Electronic Image Stabiliser System
- Direct Print function
- PictBridge compatibility
- P42,500 / P36,995 / P32,995

ZR 60
- 800,000 pixel CCD
- 18x optical zoom
- 360x digital zoom
- Electronic Image Stabiliser System
- Direct Print function
- PictBridge compatibility
- P22,995

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2004 CANON IMAGING AND INFORMATION PRODUCTS REFLECT CANON'S CONTINUING COMMITMENT TO INNOVATION

IMPROVED IMAGE QUALITY MARKS CANON'S UPGRADED DIGITAL CAMERA LINE

Canon

Canon Marketing Philippines today announced the introduction of five new digital cameras, all of them encapsulating Canon's commitment to producing cameras which inherit the basic concepts of grace, compactness; ease of operation and high image quality, while adding a greater range of functionality.

The DIGITAL IXUS 500 & DIGITAL IXUS 430 are successors to the highly successful model DIGITAL IXUS 400. The DIGITAL IXUS IIs replaces the DIGITAL IXUS II and is positioned to meet the challenge of the competitive 3-megapixel market. Both DIGITAL IXUS models have the stylish and metallic exterior design.

The PowerShot A75 that replaces the PowerShot A70 and A60 targets those looking for PowerShot Series camera. The PowerShot A310, successor to the PowerShot A300, comes with a facelift and offers some of the best new features available at the low end of the digital market.

New Features and Ease of Operation

There are several brand new features appearing in five of the new models, these include easy printing using the Print/Share button, which lights up blue when the camera is connected to a printer* to indicate that the user can simply press the button to initiate printing.

ID Photo Print allows users to make ID-photo-size prints by cropping and printing to the desired size when connecting the camera to CP printer. To meet the market need, these new cameras offer a selection of 28 different sizes, providing typical ID-photo sizes for different countries or regions.

(*CP Direct, BJ Direct and PictBridge compliant printers)

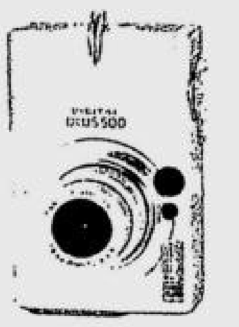
Movie Print feature prints a series of still images from recorded movie. When connected to the CP printer, the camera automatically calculates the interval based on the length of the movie and the number of still images required to fill the sheet.

Direct Transfer (Windows* only) allows the user to send images to a computer simply by pressing the Print/Share button. Different types of transfer can be selected from the image transfer menu.

And on the DIGITAL IXUS 500, DIGITAL IXUS 430 and DIGITAL IXUS IIs, the Quick Shot function improves the camera's functionality by reducing the time lag between pressing the shutter and the shutter actually opening.

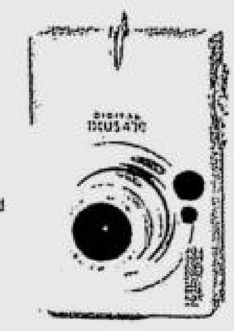
Other features shared by these cameras include Canon's ultra-fast proprietary DIGIC digital imaging processor, 3 minutes movie mode, histogram display for improved exposure information, 9-point AiAF for precision focusing on the subject (PowerShot A310 features 5-point AiAF).

Elegance with High Image Quality



IXUS 500
- 5 mega pixel CCD
- 3x Optical Zoom
- 4.1x Digital Zoom
- 9-point AIAF / 1-point AF
- Pictbridge supported

IXUS 430
- 4 mega pixel CCD
- 2x Optical Zoom
- 3.6x Digital Zoom
- 9-point AIAF / 1-point AF
- Pictbridge supported

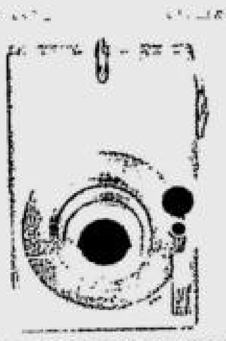


DIGITAL IXUS 500 & DIGITAL IXUS 430

Elegant, ultra-compact, easy to use and offering high image quality, the DIGITAL IXUS 500 & DIGITAL IXUS 430 are positioned as the top models in the DIGITAL IXUS line. Retaining the proven box-and-circle design concept, they now include design enhancements, a new gold lens ring for the DIGITAL IXUS 500 and a silver lens ring on the DIGITAL IXUS 430, plus an ultra-thin 'super-hard Cerabrite' coating, to give them a classier look.

The DIGITAL IXUS 500 is the first DIGITAL IXUS camera to incorporate the 5-megapixel 1/1.8-inch type CCD, offering a higher level of still-image resolution than other cameras in this series with maximum recording pixels for still images of 2592 x 1944. Both cameras feature a 3x optical zoom with an advanced digital zoom of approximately 4.1x on the DIGITAL IXUS 500 and 3.6x on the DIGITAL IXUS 430. The DIGITAL IXUS 500 can record movies with sound at VGA resolution.

(*Require installation of camera driver and dedicated software. However, camera driver is not required for Windows XP.)



IXUS IIs
- 3.2 mega pixel CCD
- 2x Optical Zoom
- 3.2x Digital Zoom
- 9-point AIAF / 1-point AF
- Pictbridge supported

DIGITAL IXUS IIs

The 3.2-megapixel DIGITAL IXUS IIs inherits proven design concepts of IXUS models yet is even smaller. It sports a new bright and classy body with a sophisticated white exterior created by the use of 'Silver White Finish', the world's first such surface treatment technology.

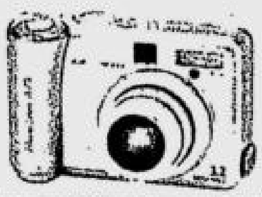
The DIGITAL IXUS IIs features an ultra-compact, retractable 2x optical zoom lens (Dime-size lens) with an advanced digital zoom of approximately 3.2x. Combined digital and optical zoom on the camera is 6.4x.

PowerShot A75

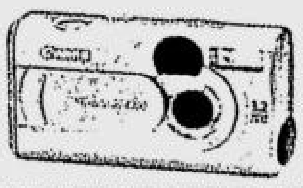
Graceful and with universal appeal, the PowerShot A75 is a new user-friendly camera in Canon's A Series, offering a design that now incorporates a compact and efficient light-guide flash, plus a four-blade lens cover inside the lens barrel. The camera's most distinctive features are the new Eryngii-Mushroom-Shaped Grip, designed specifically to enhance operability, and a new control layout enhancing ease of operation. With this camera it would be easy for the user to move more quickly in catching those fleeting photo opportunities.

The 3x optical zoom gives approximately 10x in combination with the approx 3.2x digital zoom, and a Special Scene Mode offers six different scenes, Foliage, Snow, Beach, Fireworks, Underwater and Indoor. The camera automatically setting itself to match the selected scene type.

POWERSHOT A75
- 3.2 mega pixel CCD
- 3x Optical Zoom
- 3.2x Digital Zoom
- 9-point AIAF / 1-point AF
- Pictbridge supported



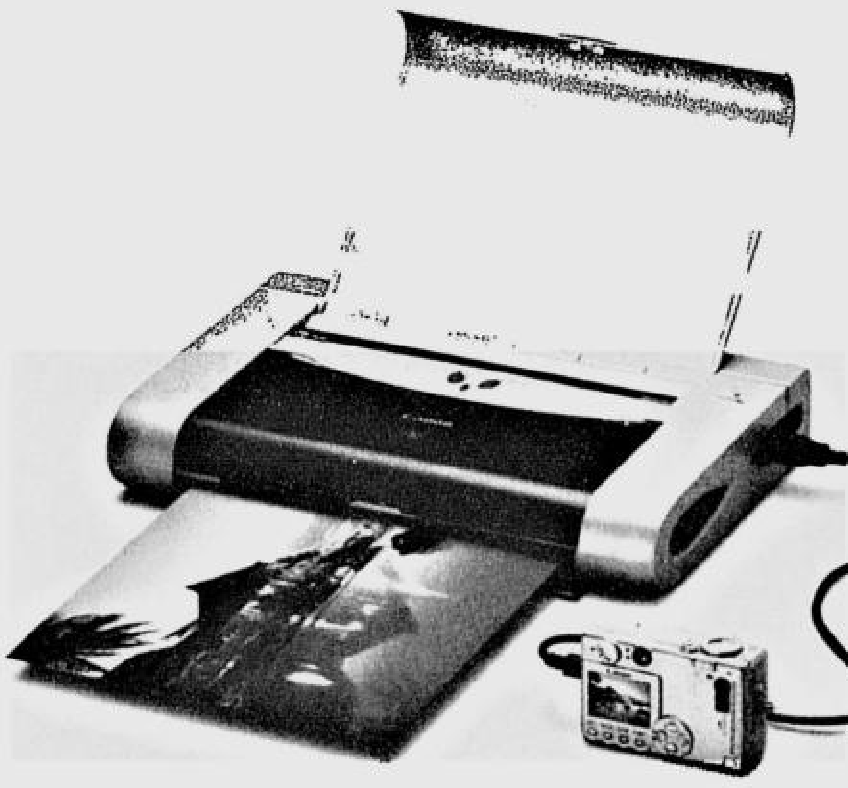
POWERSHOT 310
- 3.2 mega pixel CCD
- Single Focus Optical Zoom
- 5.1x Digital Zoom
- 5-point AIAF / 1-point AF
- Pictbridge supported



PowerShot A310

The PowerShot A310 incorporates design changes with greater ease of operation, all packaged in a new high-grade light champagne-gold colour scheme and a stylish, elongated body with slide-type lens cover to give a graceful appearance, plus a 1.5-inch LCD.

The 3.2-megapixel CCD and 5.1x digital zoom offer higher picture quality and more features than ordinarily available in the entry-level digital camera market and has been given a new facelift plus new print-related features.



*i*80
BUBBLE JET PRINTER

Canon

now with pictbridge and bluetooth*

▶ Print on the move with the Canon i80, the wireless, portable A4 printer that connects to any PictBridge enabled digital camera or camcorder. ◀

Printing has just gone mobile with the new Canon i80 Colour Bubble Jet printer. Print wirelessly from your notebook, PDA or handphone with Infra-red and Bluetooth* technology. Or print direct from any PictBridge enabled digital camera/camcorder. The Canon i80 lets you print business documents as well as A4 borderless photos with ease. Superfine 4x6" photos at 4800 x 1200 dpi resolution can be printed in less than a minute. What's more, with ink droplets a mere 2 pico-litres in size, images are grain-free and colours more intense than ever before. So go ahead. Liberate yourself. Pick up (and very easily too) a compact Canon i80 today.

** Optional Bluetooth adaptor*

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PictBridge Exif Print Bluetooth

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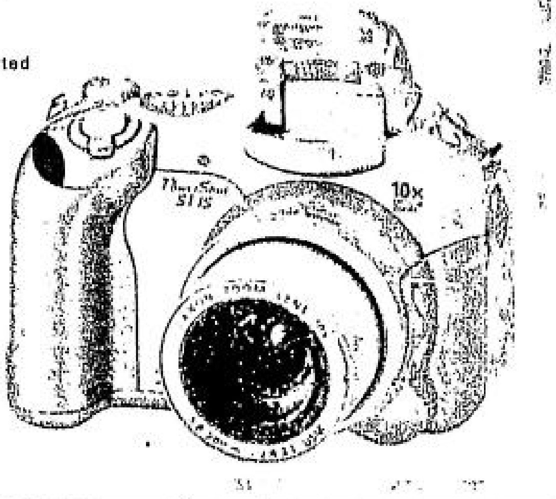
2004 CANON IMAGING AND INFORMATION PRODUCTS REFLECT CANON'S CONTINUING COMMITMENT TO INNOVATION

Powershot S1 IS
- 5 mega pixel CCD
- 10x Optical Zoom
- 3.2x Digital Zoom
- TTL Autofocus; 1- point AF
- Pictbridge supported



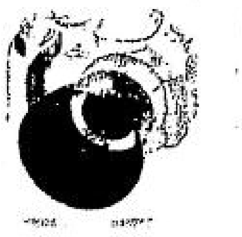
WANT MOVIES, WANT STILLS? GET THE NEW CANON POWERSHOT S1 IS WITH 10X OPTICAL ZOOM AND IMAGE STABILIZER!

Canon Marketing Philippines today announced the all new PowerShot S1 IS, creating a new stream for digital cameras as Canon's first to allow users to take both extended movies as well as still images with image stabilizer.

Designed for all consumers as 'the only camera you'll ever need', the all-new PowerShot S1 IS is equipped not only with a high-power 10x optical zoom lens with image stabilizer, but also with full-motion movie mode allowing shooting at 30 frames per second (640 x 480 pixels VGA quality), with continuous recording up to 1GB* or up to approximately 60 minutes with sound. You'll never need to carry two separate cameras again.

The PowerShot S1 IS delivers high image quality from a 3.2 megapixel CCD (2048 x 1536 pixels), advanced functions including AF with user-selectable focusing point, and superb operability from an improved user interface. This is all packaged in an original, stylish two-tone-silver, curved surface form creating the atmosphere of a whole new era for digital cameras.

Extra Zoom for Extra Reach



Now you can reach out with the PowerShot S1 IS's new high-resolution 10x optical zoom lens (38 – 380 mm [35 mm film equivalent], f/2.8 – f/3.1) giving the camera an ultra-high-power zoom capability of approx. 32x (10x optical and approx. 3.2x digital), and making it particularly well suited for shooting sports and other events. To reduce the effect of camera shake when shooting at telescopic range, the PowerShot S1 IS is equipped with a high precision shift-type image stabilizer system (IS), as first introduced to the world by Canon, and as also found on some high-end Canon video camcorder models. An intricate structure of moving parts makes the zoom lens fully retractable inside the camera body. The camera's high-speed, extremely quiet zoom operations are achieved by an ultrasonic motor (USM), first introduced by Canon as a camera lens drive motor.

Advanced Video for Creatively Recording Your Special Moments

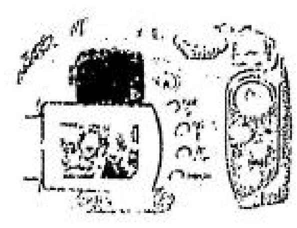
To capture those 'moving' scenes you'll want to remember, the PowerShot S1 IS enables full-motion movie recording with high image quality at 30 frames per second, VGA-sized, supported by Canon's acclaimed DIGIC ultra-fast digital imaging processor.

During movie recording AE/AF/AWB modes, zooming, AF lock, exposure lock and exposure compensation controls are selectable.

(*Recording times may vary depending on the CF card's capacity and image quality)

To maximize shooting capacity, high-speed editing of long movie files enables unneeded parts to be edited from the start or from the end. Also noted is the greatly improved movie sound and still image sound-memo quality at 22Khz/16bit from previous models.

Advanced Functions



A full range of advanced functions includes user-selectable auto-focusing points, three metering functions, 15-second to 1/2000-second shutter speeds, built-in flash with three flashing modes and first- or second-curtain sync, plus 13 types of selectable shooting modes. The PowerShot S1 IS features a 1.5" vari-angle LCD monitor that disables mirror imaging and a new TTL electronic viewfinder has been adopted to solve impracticality of taking telephoto shots or pictures under bright sunlight using the LCD monitor.

The retractable high-powered pop-up flash is easily set for red-eye reduction, and advanced customization such as flash exposure compensation, FE Lock, second-curtain flash and slow flash synchronization.

Superb Ease of Operation

To give users a dynamic but hassle-free photographic experience, the large grip on the PowerShot S1 IS, equivalent to that of an SLR, provides a steady hold and acts as the perfect support for still images and movies. Frequently used time-consuming functions can be assigned to a shortcut button to handle a total of eight essential functions.

To make extended video recording more easy and comfortable, an independent movie button has been added exclusively for starting and stopping movie recording which also combines a tally lamp that blinks to show movie recording is under way.

Direct Print Compatibility

The PowerShot S1 IS not only enables direct printing to Canon's Direct Photo Printers, but is also PictBridge-compliant, allowing direct printing to any Pictbridge-enabled printer.

Beautiful Ergonomics to Fit Your Hand

Reinforcing the PowerShot S1 IS's image of cutting-edge style and advanced performance is an original curved surface form, coated in two-tone silver for an outstanding appearance.

System Accessories

The PowerShot S1 IS comes equipped with a full range of options and accessories, including a high-speed CF card for full-motion movie recording, a Tele-converter TC-DC52B (1.6x), Wide converter WC-DC52C (0.7x), Conversion lens adapter LA-DC52E, Lens hood LH-DC20, High-capacity NiMH rechargeable batteries/charger and Waterproof case WP-DC20 for reaching up to 40 meters under water.

Canon

Miles from civilisation

Sub-zero temperatures

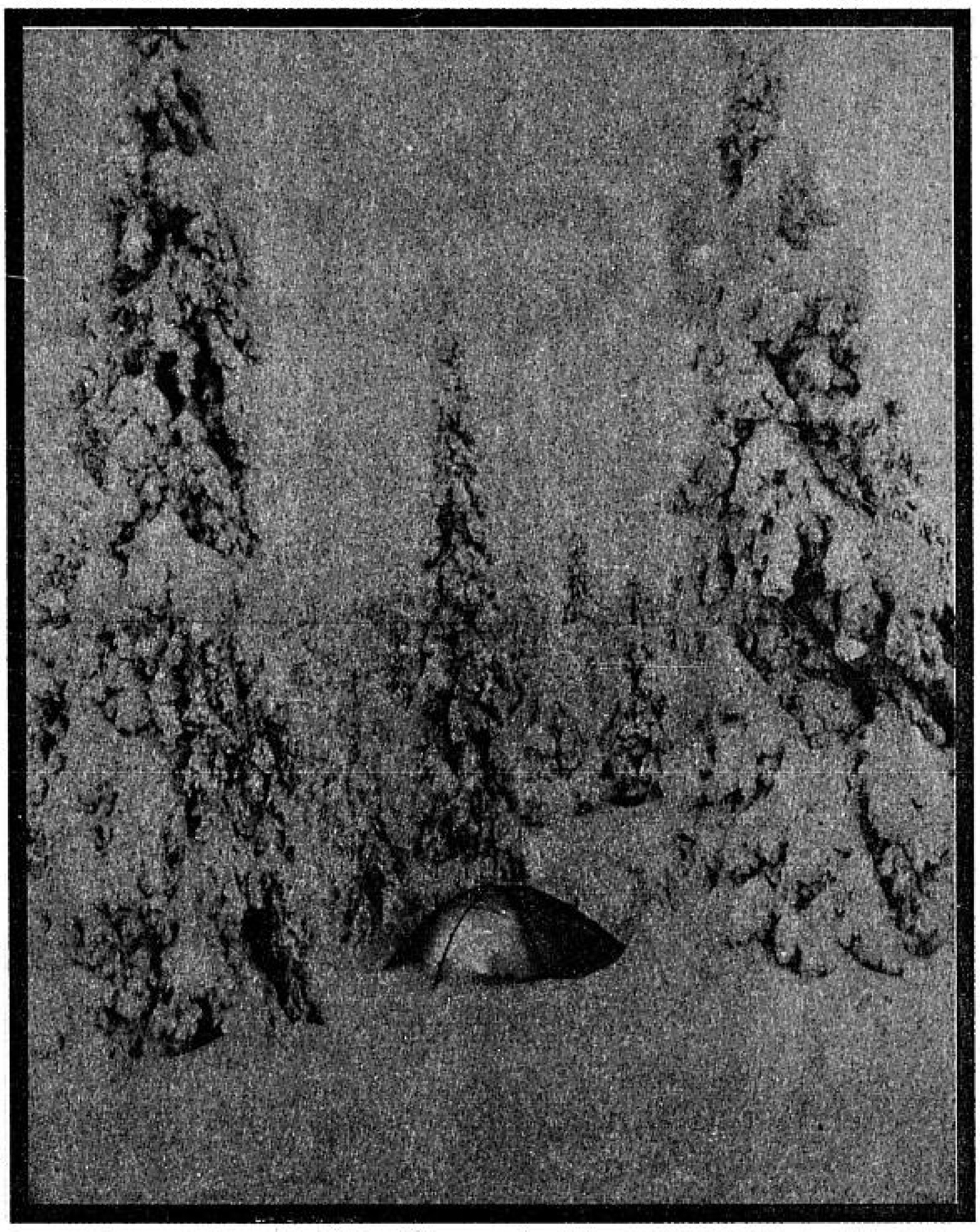
Frostbite and blisters

Wild bears and wolves

[illegible] dry food rations

Limited water supply

All for the perfect shot.

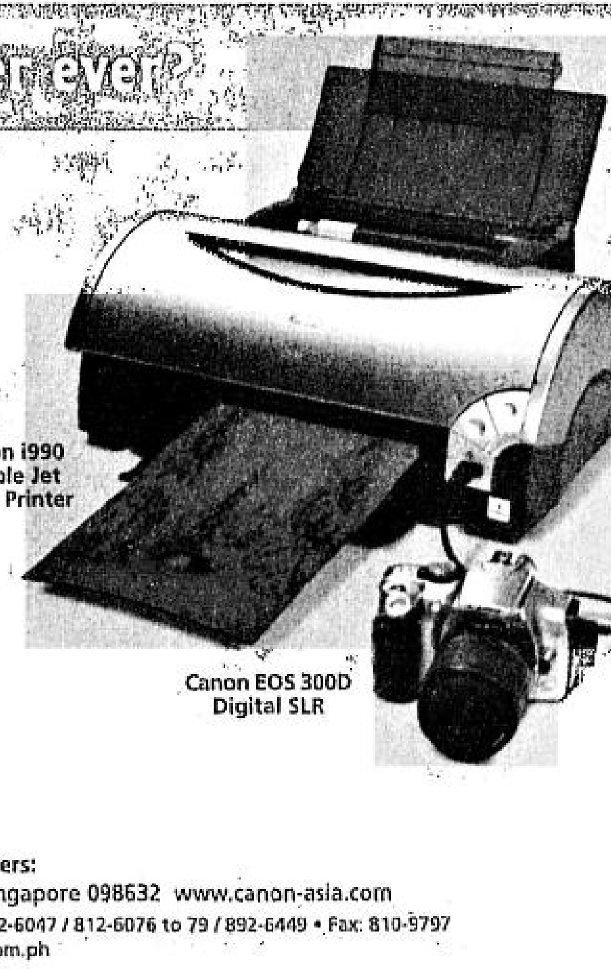


Why not print it on the best photo printer ever?

It often takes a lot of effort to capture truly incredible images. This is why you deserve the new Canon i990 photo printer to produce the finest photographic prints. With its exclusive ChromaPLUS™ technology that features an additional red ink to expand colour reproduction by 60%, the i990 has one of the widest colour gamut of any inkjet photo printer. Its 5,376 nozzles also prints quality A4 photos at an astounding speed of 37 seconds. Trust the new Canon i990 to deliver photo prints that are simply out of this world.

- 4800 x 2400 dpi resolution
- 2 picolitres with Canon's New "MicroFine Droplet Technology"
- 7-colour ChromaPLUS ink technology
- USB 2.0 Hi-Speed connection

ChromaPLUS BUBBLE JET DIRECT PictBridge USB



Canon i990 Bubble Jet Photo Printer

Canon EOS 300D Digital SLR

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